

## THE NEW TEACHING

FIRST PRINTED . . . . .	May 1918
SECOND IMPRESSION . . . . .	December 1918
THIRD IMPRESSION . . . . .	March 1920
FOURTH IMPRESSION . . . . .	September 1921
POPULAR EDITION FIRST PRINTED . . . . .	October 1922
POPULAR EDITION REPRINTED . . . . .	January 1925
POPULAR EDITION REPRINTED . . . . .	April 1927
POPULAR EDITION REPRINTED . . . . .	September 1930

*Made and Printed in Great Britain.  
Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury.*

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# THE NEW TEACHING

## CHAPTER I

### THE NEW TEACHING

By JOHN ADAMS, M.A., B.Sc., LL.D.

We may not like the popular fashion of tacking on the adjective *new* to all sorts of words, and speaking of the new theology, the new politics, the new psychology. The more severe among us may even find pleasure in demonstrating that the term when used in these *clichés* almost never describes anything really fresh ; that the more things appear to differ from their older forms the more they are the same. Still, the popularity of this use of the adjective must have a cause, and it may be worth our while to see why it affects teaching. Whether there is a new teaching or not may be an open question, but the mere fact that people are talking about it shows that it is at least desired. It is when people are tired of the present form of anything that they begin to talk of a fresh form. True, there is a type of mind that is eager for change in itself, merely as change. Some people do not think they are getting on unless they are making obvious changes in the things around them. No doubt progress in the last resort does

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necessarily imply change, but it does not at all follow that this change should be of the dramatic sort that satisfies the popular taste.

Fortunately our profession is safe from the danger of violent change coming from within. Our defect is generally supposed to lie in the opposite direction ; as a body teachers are said to be averse to change. Professionally we are a conservative folk, not given to running after the strange gods of mutation ; we are only too willing to keep on in our old ways. But we are also a profession with a conscience of some sensibility—a sensibility that certainly does not diminish with the increase in the proportion of women who enter it. Most of us want to be up to date in our methods, and young teachers are particularly keen to "keep abreast of all the latest educational developments," if we may borrow the phrase so dear to the heart of the writer of testimonials. They are always on the look out for some new thing, and their early career is sometimes marked by a surprising series of quick changes. The outcome is sometimes a sense of doubt and despondency. Each fresh improvement seems such an advance on what has gone before that by and by the young teacher gets a little frightened at his progress because of the shade into which his present brightness casts his previous work. The disturbing question forces itself upon him : If my past methods are so inferior to my present, may it not be that my present will look contemptible when I have reached a still higher level ? Then comes the doubt : Am I really making progress after all, or am I merely changing without necessarily going forward ?

Take the case of the teacher who at forty-five comes

to the conclusion that his early methods were bad, and that only by gradual steps has he reached one that is, if not quite satisfactory, at least nearly so. It is natural that he should wish to communicate his discovery to those who are now at the stage at which he was when he used inferior methods. Young teachers are apt to get perturbed when such a teacher deals faithfully with them. But what they must realise is that at each stage in his progress this experienced teacher has had the same impression that he now has about his present and his past professional skill. He has always been just on the point of attaining a method that will be really satisfactory. He never is, but always to be, blest with a vision of technical perfection. In other words, the man is a living and wholesomely developing organism. His methods at any particular stage are quite suitable for him *at that stage*. He cannot, however, remain permanently satisfied with them, because he is himself advancing. It does not follow that his method at forty-five is absolutely better than his method at twenty-five ; but it is better *for him*. No doubt it may also be absolutely better, as indeed it should be in these days when methods are intelligently studied, and progressive teachers are willing to learn from each other, and to take advantage of all the help that our educational periodicals now offer. But in any case the method he has developed for himself by intelligent experiment and experience is the best for him.

The young teacher, therefore, need not be oppressed either by his less skilful past or his more skilful future, so long as he is going on developing. Changes of point of view and of method during a teacher's career give evidence of vital force. The man is not

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stagnating. Each change as it occurs is an indication that he is reacting on his own environment, modifying it to meet his own needs and the needs of his pupils, behaving, in fact, as a healthy organism should. The man who begins with quite a respectable set of methods, and proceeds to apply them with mechanical uniformity all through his professional career, is soon practically dead to all progress. His methods may have been good at the beginning, and may not in themselves be bad at the end; but if they really suited him at the beginning, they cannot quite fit his case at the finish. We must change with our times. Naturally this is no argument for mere change—change for its own sake. Rather than walk like their forefathers some people would almost prefer to go on all fours. Without falling to this depth, the teacher may well become suspicious of his professional vigour when he finds himself unwilling to criticise and modify his methods.

What is true of the individual teacher is also true of the profession as a whole. Each generation evolves methods suited to its special needs. No doubt the changes in method that take place from time to time do not always introduce novelties. Indeed, some of our contemporary historians of education take a special pride in tracing almost all our recent innovations to plans suggested long ago by masters of the craft. The history of medicine indicates that there is a certain periodicity in therapeutic methods, and something of the same kind may be made out in the history of teaching. But this does not imply that there has been no real progress. Each reappearance of an old method finds it treated on a higher plane. We may not have made as much progress as we might have

done, but few critics will deny that we have made definite advances in teaching methods since the days of Plato and Aristotle, however much these giants may overtop us as individual teachers.

It will be observed that our subject is the new teaching, and not the new education. Naturally they cannot be altogether separated. It is conceivable that we could educate without making use of what is technically called teaching, but it is impossible to teach without educating. We cannot communicate knowledge without to some extent modifying character, and to that extent educating. But it is highly desirable on occasion to limit our attention to the problem of communicating knowledge, without, for the time being, considering the educational effects. In this book, for example, we are concerned with the teaching of the various subjects of the school curriculum, and we may fairly claim to be excused from discussing the educational values of the different studies, though the writers will, wherever necessary, indicate the educational bearings of the methods they describe. Their purpose is to give as full and as accurate a description as they can of the actual conditions under which instruction is given in the subjects they have undertaken to treat. As experts, they give an account of the latest developments of the teaching of their subjects, and in particular they deal with material aids—books and apparatus of all kinds—available for use in the class-room. Each expert will, of course, have to deal with the methods of his subject as one aspect of the new teaching ; but in order to avoid overlapping and repetition it will be necessary to gather up here the general characteristics that warrant us in speaking of a new teaching at all. Most readers

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of this book will have a special interest in one or more subjects, and will naturally turn to the chapters where these are treated ; but, as a preliminary, readers should consider the general characteristics of teaching as found in our present-day schools. They will find when they turn to their special subjects that abundant illustrations of these characteristics are provided.

Is there, then, a new teaching ? Are there such marked tendencies in the school work of the present day as to warrant us in using this term ? What follows is an attempt to show that "yes" is the answer to both questions.

To begin with, the profession has come to self-consciousness. In the experience of each individual there comes a time at which he begins to examine himself, to compare himself with others, to realise that he is a separate entity, a self. It is difficult to fix in the case of the individual the exact time at which this consciousness of self makes its appearance, and the same difficulty is experienced in dealing with collective units like a profession. But there are many indications that justify the claim that at the present moment the teaching craft has just attained, or is just attaining, a consciousness of its corporate self. When the N.U.E.T. and the Head-masters' Conference came into being almost at the same time, we had the beginning of the process that has resulted in the present Teachers' Registration Council, which, to some degree at least, focuses the interests of the more than two hundred and fifty educational associations that find a place in the catalogue annually published by the *Journal of Education*. To-day, more than ever before, the profession is aware of its own existence. It has become consolidated ; it has developed a strong craft

feeling ; it has begun to take itself in hand to see what it can make of itself.

While this is true on the social and economic sides, it is no less true with regard to technique. On the one hand, the elementary teachers are rising above the somewhat narrow conception of method that used to fetter them ; on the other, the secondary teachers are developing a sympathetic understanding of the possibilities of a rational technique as compared with the light-of-nature modes of working with which their predecessors were proud to be satisfied. An excellent indication of the new spirit is to be found in the large number of associations formed for the specific purpose of promoting the scientific study of the teaching of the various branches. Practically every subject that finds a place in the school curriculum has now its separate society. When we add to all this the superabundance of conferences on teaching, we feel that we have made out an unanswerable argument for the thesis that the profession has reached self-consciousness in the good sense of that term. It may indeed be held that we have proved too much, and that, in view especially of the plethora of teaching conferences, the profession may be said to be self-conscious also in the bad sense. As an extenuating circumstance it may be urged, somewhat shamefacedly, that all teachers have not acquired the conference habit.

Indeed, the evidence tends to show that the majority of teachers do not trouble themselves about the development of the technical aspects of their professional work. Once they have acquired, either by training or by experimenting by trial and error on their first classes, a sufficient mastery of the practical details of their work, they are content to rest upon their oars

and go on through life living upon their small paid-up capital of technical skill. It is the more intelligent, or at any rate the more conscientious, minority that originate and carry on professional societies and conferences. There need be no hesitation in confessing this here, for the very fact that a teacher reads such a book as this demonstrates that he belongs to the conscientious minority. No great tact need be exercised to avoid hurting the feelings of the careless majority, for there is small chance of these pages ever coming to their notice. There is the consolation that it is the minority that determine the line of progress. What they decide to do gives direction to the general movement, and teachers are to-day modifying their methods as a direct result of the conclusions reached by meetings and conferences at which they have never been present, and in which they have no interest. The society-forming and conference-attending group of teachers make up the growing point of the profession. Thanks to their activities the leaven of progress is working throughout the whole teaching body. The important point for us is that we have abundant proof that teachers as a class think to-day of the technique of their work in a way they have never done before.

Curiously enough, the first result of the spread of self-examination among the teachers is a certain doubt about the need for the present amount of teaching. There is an uneasy feeling among the more thoughtful members of our craft that perhaps we are teaching too much. It is beginning to be realised that in schools we are obsessed with the conviction that "nothing of itself will come," and we must still be teaching. Even in ordinary life there is a superabundance of what

Professor Raleigh calls "dull, explanatory persons," who never know when to stop their tiresome expounding ; and in schools it is only natural that this vice should be rampant. Accordingly, it is a hopeful sign to hear teachers speaking favourably of "wholesome neglect," though the epigrammatic form suggests the false impression that the antidote to overteaching is simply the cessation from teaching. What is really wanted is a better manipulation of the incidence of teaching. In particular, the relative activities of teachers and pupils have to be revised. In the new teaching it is recognised that the pupil must play a more vigorous part than in the old. This primary principle shows itself in many of the popular demands made by what it is fashionable to call educational reformers.

The public is becoming insistent on the need for training pupils in initiative. It is complained that young people are being turned out of our schools who can perhaps carry out orders<sup>1</sup> with a fair degree of success, but have no independence of judgment and no power of originating new developments or modifying instructions in such a way as satisfactorily to meet unexpected changes of conditions. Corresponding to this external criticism there is a growing insistence among professional critics on the need to treat pupils as not mere recipients, but as active participants in the work of school. We are told that more and more must be thrown upon the pupils themselves : they must be made increasingly responsible for their own education. With all this no fault need be found, and

<sup>1</sup> Though even this is challenged, as is shown by the complaint of employers who report to the London County Council that there are very few ex-secondary girls who can take ordinary instructions or write a letter.

it will be admitted indeed by those who know best the actual work done in our schools that this point of view is more honoured in practice than outside critics are aware of. It may be remarked in passing that one of the minor trials of the more alert teachers of to-day is to be admonished by press and platform to do things that they have been doing for years.

The success of the responsibility system is hampered by the elementary fact that a great proportion of pupils do not *want* to learn. Outside critics too often write as if schoolboy nature had changed, and pupils no longer creep unwillingly to school. The increased public interest in education is not without its effect on the tone of the pupils, but it is not even yet sufficient to change juvenile human nature. Sometimes it is taken for granted that the pupils are eager to get as much good as they can out of the school course, and all that is needed is to have the teachers convinced that more freedom should be allowed to the initiative of the young folks. The practical teacher knows that a large part of his time is taken up in devising means to stimulate them to take any active share at all in school work. But even so, the newer methods are quite different from the old. The progressive teacher no longer assumes the attitude of one who seeks to impress his personality on his pupils, and to stuff them with the knowledge that he considers valuable. He recognises that the majority of his pupils do not desire to work, and is aware that his problem is to put them in such a position that it is unpleasant to be idle, and attractive to be active. He arranges all the school work accordingly, and in so doing comes under the lash of M. Emile Boutroux, who resents all attempts to modify the environment in such a way as to produce

by indirect means the results formerly attained by direct. For pedagogy M. Boutroux has undisguised contempt.<sup>1</sup> Everything must be straightforward as in the old education, and all manipulation avoided by which ingenious pedagogues seek to work upon the characters of the pupils without their knowledge. He need not greatly concern himself on this score, as only too few practical teachers have time or opportunity to undertake this manipulation ; but he must reconcile himself to the fact that our new teaching does recognise the need of taking steps to reach indirectly the goal of stimulating the individual activity of the pupils.

Whatever means are taken to secure that the pupil shall do his own work, it is a principle of the new teaching that the school must take account of his point of view and his peculiarities. To use one of Dr. Stanley Hall's verbal indiscretions, the new teaching is *paidocentric* : it focusses its interests rather on the pupil than on the subject he studies. Let there be no mistake here. The spread of specialism in teaching bears eloquent testimony to the attention paid to a thorough mastery of the subject-matter to be taught. At no time was "a knowledge of the subject" more highly regarded among efficient teachers than at the present moment. But this respect for knowledge is now balanced by a respect for the means of presenting it in such a way as to minimise waste of time and effort in the process. It is recognised that in the ultimate resort a subject must be approached from the stand-point of the pupil, rather than of the teacher. Hitherto, whatever interest there was in this matter of approach had its origin in the teacher's relation to the study. Everything was regarded from his point of view. Now

<sup>1</sup> See his *Education and Ethics* : Introduction.

we have books<sup>1</sup> written specifically from the stand-point of the pupil.

No doubt this line of investigation, this consideration of how it strikes the individual pupil, is as yet at a very rudimentary stage. We have much to learn about how the pupil looks at things ; but the problem has been clearly stated, and its importance recognised, so the result cannot but affect in a very definite way the activities of the new teaching. In point of fact the application has already begun, for we have a report<sup>2</sup> from Principal Carl H. Nielson, of Vallejo, California, describing a system in which one period of forty-five minutes is set apart for each subject once a fortnight for the express purpose of giving instruction to the pupils in how to study that particular subject at the stage at which they find themselves. Principal Nielson reports that the natural tendency is for the teachers to treat this additional period merely as some extra time for the ordinary teaching of the subject. But he has got them to realise the importance of the new point of view, and they loyally carry out his idea, while the pupils find so much benefit from the change that they do not complain, though it involves an additional period of forty-five minutes every school day, since every subject must have its turn.

All this concentration of attention on the individual pupil's needs necessarily suggests that the new teaching must adopt a fresh attitude towards the class system. Can we combine class teaching with the individual attention that is now claimed ? A friendly

<sup>1</sup> F. M. McMurry's *How to Study* ; Lida B. Earhart, *Teaching Children to Study* ; John Adams, *The Student's Guide* ; W. H. S. Jones, *How we Learn* ; W. C. Bagley, *Craftsmanship in Teaching*, chapter viii.

<sup>2</sup> See *The School Review* (Chicago) for March 1917.

foreign critic supplies a starting point for our discussion when he says that from the individualistic point of view "the school exists merely because it is impossible to provide each pupil with a private teacher."<sup>1</sup> We have to note in the first place that the remark applies to teaching, and not to education in its wide sense. The strength of our traditional English education lies, in fact, precisely in the group system that de Hovre's saying would seem to disparage. All that is most characteristic of our public-school education is based upon team work, and therefore demands the group system. The school is thus essential to the English scheme of education; but it does not follow that it is essential to the English scheme of teaching. So far as our public schools are concerned, the team work that is of the very essence of the educational system becomes little more than a *pis aller* when it comes to teaching. The class is an economic device that enables the master to deal with larger numbers than he could otherwise manage. Very commonly the class used to be treated as a mere group of individuals, each of whom was dealt with separately, though, for the sake of convenience, they were all collected together in one room.

While it was possible in the secondary schools to treat the individual pupils as separate units, the large numbers in the elementary school classes made it imperative that in them there should be real collective teaching. The class had to become the unit, and each of the pupils had to fit himself as well as he could into the general scheme. This had its obvious disadvantages, but it also had its compensations. The overburdened class teacher is apt to think that the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fr. de Hovre, *German and English Education* (1917), p. 39.

private coach has everything in his favour. There is a best way of approaching every individual boy in the process of instruction, and the private coach is at liberty to find out that approach and use it, whereas the class teacher has to adopt an approach that will meet the needs of the average. Most teachers are willing to accept the position that under all circumstances the class is necessarily a compromise : that we must, to some extent at least, sacrifice the individual to the group. But this leaves out of account certain positive advantages that belong to class teaching. The stimulation supplied by competition may be claimed to belong rather to education than to teaching, though this is one of the points at which it is very difficult to mark off the two spheres from each other. In any case the very fact that the class teacher has to deal with many pupils at the same time forces him to vary his presentation, to approach matters from more than one point of view, to supply a particularly wide range of illustration.

In order that the duller part of a class may fully understand a lesson, much more material must be used than would be necessary in the case of the brighter pupils, and to this extent it might be assumed that the class system is wasteful in their case. But though the cleverer pupils may understand something on its first presentation, it does not follow that any further exposition and illustration are wasted. At the end of the lesson the dullest pupils have reached the minimum mastery of their material that can be accepted as satisfactory, but the abler pupils have gained a great deal from having had to view the matter from so many different points of view, and from having presented to them so many different illustrations. Their

experience has been enriched, for they have been able to assimilate all the material that has been presented, whereas the duller pupils can assimilate only those parts that happen to meet their particular needs. For example, the teacher uses four different illustrations. Of these, one or other will probably make the proper appeal to the duller pupils, while the remainder may produce no effect upon them. With the brighter spirits, on the other hand, every illustration will tell, with a corresponding enrichment of his knowledge.

In addition, we must not lose sight of the fact that on the intellectual side there is, or at any rate there may be, a collective spirit as pronounced and as stimulating as on the athletic: there may be a class spirit as well as a team spirit. No doubt most of the work of learning is an individual matter. Each must learn for himself. Yet in the hands of a skilful teacher occasions are continually arising in which the class as a unit is roused to a certain enthusiasm: there is an intellectual glow in the reactions that go on between teacher and pupils; the class consciousness is roused and there is genuine collective work. So it comes about that even in cases where the numbers are so small that the pupils can be dealt with as mere individuals, the skilful teacher will every now and again stir up the class spirit and treat his pupils as a collective unit. It is a mark of the new teaching to discriminate between these two attitudes, the individualistic and the collective, and to find a place for each.

Beginning at the youngest stage, we have in the Montessori system a scheme in which the collective spirit is at its minimum. This is probably as it should be, if we are to follow the parallel of team work; for

experience has shown that a certain maturity must be reached before youngsters can rise to the spirit of concerted action in which the individual loses himself in his "side." But Dr. Montessori probably goes too far when she maintains, as it is reported that she does, that she has rung the death-knell of class teaching. No doubt in her system the collective spirit is minimised; indeed, at the beginning at any rate, it was practically ignored. But critics, so far from regarding this as a merit, treat it as a defect. It is pointed out that one of the main advantages of school education is lost to the children who are brought up on the purely individualistic principles of the scheme. It may be that in the Kindergarten there is an excess of concerted activity, but in the Montessori school there is, or at any rate there was, certainly a defect. In point of fact, it is impossible to exclude the collective spirit in any system of education in which we deal with a group of little children gathered into one room. Marching and singing and dancing are of the very essence of life where youngsters are taught together. The Montessorians themselves are recognising the need and value of collective work, and in her later writing the founder herself claims that in some of her school exercises it has full scope.

Speaking of the characteristic "silence game," she maintains that: "This exercise develops very definitely the social spirit,"<sup>1</sup> and indeed goes the length of claiming that "No other lesson, no other 'situation,' could do the same." Without conceding the monopoly thus claimed, a critic may cordially agree that in this game we have a "demonstration of the co-operation of all the members of a community

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*, pp. 78, 79.

to achieve a common end." It is obvious that this recognition of the collective spirit is made on the educational side, and it is quite likely that Dr. Montessori still objects to the class as a *teaching* unit. Indeed, like Rousseau, Froebel, and many others, she is not enamoured of teaching in any form. In all schemes involving the principle that the pupils teach themselves under the general direction of a master or mistress, there is not much room for the class. Yet the Kindergarteners, while insisting on the self-activity and individuality of the child, retain the class as the unit of teaching. But in order that there may be the proper co-ordination of individual and collective work, they maintain that the class must be small. One would naturally expect, therefore, that the Montessori system would demand a still smaller class. But this is not so.

A London teacher, who was aided by the London County Council to take a course under Dr. Montessori at Rome, was supplied with certain questions to which she was to get answers if possible. One of these was, "For what number of pupils can a Montessori teacher be responsible, if she is to do effective work?" Dr. Montessori's reply was surprising. She said that, with the aid of an "assistant" (by which term is meant not an assistant teacher, but a young girl—one of the "motherly" sort of which we hear so much—who could look after the physical needs of the children), a teacher can carry on satisfactorily the work of a group of forty-five children. In discussing this number with Montessori teachers in actual practice—I was careful not to let them know that the estimate came from the highest source—I found that they were generally inclined to accept it as reasonable

Asked how they accounted for the greater numbers the Montessorians were inclined to take as compared with the Kindergarteners, they gave the interesting explanation that with small numbers the children in Montessori schools were inclined to want to do the same things—to imitate each other; in fact, to develop the class spirit and become a social unit.

This unexpected estimate of the number of individual separate-working pupils for which a supervisor can be responsible has an important bearing on the problem of the extension of the Montessori organisation into the upper school. This extension has been enthusiastically taken up by Mr. Norman MacMunn in his *Differentialism: a New Method of Class Self-teaching*. In his own subject of Modern Languages he found that the amount of time individual pupils had for actual practical work during a school period was ludicrously inadequate, so he divided up his classes into pairs of pupils who alternately became pupil and teacher to each other. Two sets of books are provided, one the teacher book and the other the pupil book, the boys using now the one, now the other, according to the part they play at the time. There is something appalling in the thought of how French pronunciation would fare after being dealt with faithfully according to the lights of a pair of enterprising schoolboys; but there are possibilities in this development of an old scheme of co-operation. Other subjects there are in which the method involves perhaps less danger than in pronunciation, and it is for experts to determine how far the scheme can be applied in their departments.

The whole question of partnership<sup>1</sup> in teaching

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. MacMunn's *A Path to Freedom in the School*, Part II.

raises important issues with regard to the permanency of our existing system of class instruction. At present there is certainly too strong a prejudice in favour of uniformity of results from our class work. Teachers are prone to set up the ideal that all their pupils shall do the same things in exactly the same way. The tendency is naturally more marked in elementary schools, since in them the need for labour-saving organisation is imperative. The notion of drill is prominent, even yet, and formerly was all powerful. Movements had to be executed "by numbers." A writing lesson sometimes began by numbers going up as high as ten, each number indicating a movement towards the final result of making the first ink character in the copybooks. Pens had to be held in exactly the same way by all the pupils. This craving for uniformity had really two bases, though they were not clearly separated in the minds of the teachers. These are (1) the need for smooth working of the class organisation; (2) the need for acquiring the very best way of carrying on any school work.

The first of these reasons is as operative to-day as ever before. Anything the teacher can do to reduce waste of time and to ease friction is to be encouraged, even if it involves a little loss of the pupils' freedom of action. I have heard it seriously discussed at a meeting of American teachers whether pupils should be compelled to keep time to the school music while marching to their places. There were tender souls who argued that this compulsion might do serious harm by interfering with the self-expression of the youngsters. In England, at any rate, we may take this matter as not open for discussion. Even when there is room for argument our tendency is always in

favour of a reasonable amount of uniformity, where no evil effects can follow. For example, a teacher fixes upon a certain form in which an exercise is to be set down, say in grammar or geometry. It may well be that this form is not absolutely the best, but the teacher is entitled to insist upon all his pupils adopting it, since this uniformity is a means of making his work more manageable. If each pupil is permitted to set down his results in whatever way pleases him best, there may be a slight gain in self-expression, but not sufficient to balance the additional labour thrown upon the teacher and the interference with his mode of correlating results. Wherever it is possible, however, the pupil's preferences should be respected.

This brings us to the second basis on which the claim for uniformity is founded. Here we come upon what may be fairly called the expert's fallacy. We are all apt to get wedded to the particular way in which we do things in which we claim special skill. No doubt it often happens that our way is really the best way, and sometimes we are able to demonstrate that this is so. When this is the case we are entitled to insist upon our pupils following our method exactly. But too frequently we are tempted to make our pupils follow our lines merely because we like those lines and find that they lead to satisfactory results. We are all familiar with the method of the teacher of the violin or piano who first asks his new pupil to show what he can do with the instrument, and then tells him that the first thing he has to do is to forget all that and begin at the beginning on the true plan. It has been remarked that the hardest lesson for the clever teacher to learn is to let the clever pupil be clever in his own way. To make a boy adopt a particular form of exer-

cise because it is the most convenient for the school, and is not in itself bad, is legitimate enough, but to make a boy adopt a particular method which he dislikes in favour of one that cannot be shown to be intrinsically better or more convenient in practice, is educationally unjustifiable. The new teaching recognises the right of the pupil to do things in his own way within reasonable limits.

On the whole, the modern tendency is to revert to something not unlike the conception of a class entertained by the highest type of public-school master. Within the limitations already mentioned, the old elementary-school conception is now discredited, even in the elementary schools, and the problem that remains is how far a satisfactory compromise can be effected between the ideal of individual instruction and that of teaching pupils collectively. Curiously enough, the experience of the Montessori people coincides with that of the public-school master. In both cases the instruction is mainly individual, though carried on in the presence of other pupils who are not at the moment actively employed ; and in both cases there is a tendency for the pupils to resolve themselves on occasion into a genuine class unit. The master with his small advanced class very often dealt with them pupil by pupil. The others looked on, no doubt, and there was always a sort of mild collective reaction. The master was to some extent teaching the class through the individual. Now and again, however, especially when the master was a man of personality, there would rise a vigorous collective spirit that showed itself in the rapid give and take of question and answer. In ordinary class teaching, in fact, there is always a sort of rhythm of

collective reaction—a kind of alternation of integration and disintegration of the class spirit. Sometimes the teacher deliberately arranges the alternation. He demonstrates a principle in Mathematics on the black-board, for example, and then sets his pupils to work out certain exemplifications. The first is the integration beat, the second the disintegration beat. But the same is true in the ordinary course of class teaching, even when the teacher thinks the class spirit is awake the whole time. No doubt it is never entirely absent, but it has its fluctuations, and the wise teacher does not fail to recognise the alternations.

The tendency in the new teaching is to recognise definitely the two kinds of teaching, the individual and the collective, and rather to emphasise the individual. It is at present an open question whether it is possible to revert with safety to the method of the old Scottish parish school in which pupil after pupil came up to the master's desk, did his little bit of individual work, and then went back to carry on his studies on his own responsibility. The development of the specialist system, even to some extent in the elementary schools, will remove the need for such an exaggerated form of individual teaching. In the future we shall probably have the class system pretty much in the same form as it now exists in secondary schools, but there will be an increase in the disintegration periods, and in all probability this difference will be deliberately recognised: both teachers and pupils being aware of the change from the disintegration to the integration period, or the other way round.

One important effect of the changing view of the nature of class teaching will be the modification of

the text-books. Time was when in the case of the vast majority of teachers the text-book dominated the situation in many subjects. It held the position of authority, the teacher being regarded, and regarding himself, as its exponent. As in the case of the original "texts" in Law or in the Classics, the teacher's business was to make plain to the pupils whatever was set forth in the text-book, whether the subject were mathematics, science, or history. Too often he became a mere examiner, whose function it was to make sure that the pupils had mastered the contents of the prescribed books. It was possible for parents to complain, without too wide a stretch of the truth, that the pupils had to do the learning at home, or at any rate out of class hours, and that all the teacher did was to see whether this learning had been successful.

The inevitable reaction towards the beginning of the twentieth century deposed the text-book from its place of power. The teacher was called upon to do his own teaching, to supply his own material, to get along with a text-book that was merely an aid, not an authority. Sometimes, indeed, the revolt went so far as to eliminate the text-book altogether. In the teaching of history, for example, the teacher was expected to prepare his own material and to present it to the pupils in the form of a compromise between a lecture and a lesson. As any one versed in professional human nature would expect, the bias was all towards the lecture; so we need not be surprised to find that the critics changed their ground, and said that whereas under the old conditions the pupils had to learn their lessons in private and say them off to the teachers, under the new the teachers

learn their lessons in private and say them off to the pupils. In actual practice the violence of the change was masked by the manipulation of note-books. As the teacher said off his piece the pupils had to take notes, usually under official guidance, and in this way each pupil made for himself a text-book of his own. Put in this crude and disagreeable way the change hardly seems an improvement, but in reality it marks a great advance. It is one thing to "get up" in a more or less mechanical way the material to be found in a text-book, it is quite another to learn a subject from the actual teaching of a living person and then to set down in clear notes the matter one has mastered.

No doubt everything depends upon the nature of the teaching, and the mode in which the note-taking is carried on. A mediocre teacher will probably do better work by using a good text-book than by making up a sort of temporary text-book of his own, which is afterwards to be boiled down into the manuscript text-books of his pupils. On the other hand, it is almost an ideal system to have a capable teacher passing his subject-matter through the alembic of his mind, transferring the results to the alembic of the pupil's mind, and finally getting it crystallised out into what ultimately appears in the pupil's note-book.

With regard to the actual note-making, the teacher is in a strait between two dangers. If he allows the pupils to exercise their own discretion and set down matters as they appear to them, there is a strong probability that the note-books will be full of errors in mere facts, and will certainly not present matters in their proper order or in their true perspective. On the other hand, if the teacher prescribes the order and dictates the form, there is the danger that the

pupils will lose the fundamental advantage promised by the system, which is the encouragement of initiative and self-activity. In itself this is no new problem. Those masters of teaching technique, the Jesuits, had full discussion long ago of the merits and defects of the "dictation" of notes. Their final decision was against dictation, and the modern teacher will do well to give their decision due weight. To be sure, the modern notes are not quite of the same kind as the Jesuits had in view. The abundant supply of text-books has radically modified the problem: the modern teacher has the alternative of modifying the text-books or giving them up altogether.

There are two main kinds of text-books, according to the attitude the author adopts. One set are written from the point of view that regards the subject-matter alone. The author sets out to present his material in the most logical order possible. He is concerned with his facts and with their relation to each other and to the whole subject; he does not trouble about how they will strike the person who reads the book. Let the teacher see to that. Others put in the forefront the consideration that the book is to be read by pupils who have a certain amount of previous knowledge, and no more; who have a certain average mental capacity; who work under certain more or less known conditions. Naturally this type of text-book must also take account of the logical arrangement of the subject-matter, but the writer of such books is ready to sacrifice logical arrangement if the best mode of presentation to the pupils he has in view demands the sacrifice. Naturally there are all manner of degrees between the two extremes. At the one end you have the rigid treatise on a subject

that is drawn up quite regardless of the nature or special needs of the reader who may use it. At the other extreme is the book of the self-educator type, written entirely from the point of view of the person approaching the subject, without any other aids than the book itself.

In the latter type of book the writer often drops into the second person, and addresses his reader directly. This seldom happens in a regular school text-book, but there is a growing tendency that way. Of late, text-books do all they can to help the pupil on their own account, and it is interesting to note how their authors sometimes manipulate their matter in such a way as to help the pupil without interfering with the prerogative of the teacher. The point may be illustrated by a comparison of any of the rigid Latin grammars with a book like the Rev. T. K. Arnold's *Henry's First Latin Book*, bearing its sympathetic motto from Lily, "He shall be brought past the wearisome bitterness of his learning." This little book is almost self-interpreting, and by a diligent pupil, really anxious to learn, could almost be treated as a self-educator. All that is wanted is a key to the exercises. Still, such a book may be very usefully taken as a text-book by a teacher who does not share the prejudices of Mr. Stelling in the *Mill on the Floss*, who saw no need to remove the "wearisome bitterness."

The truth is that there is no possibility of writing for the ordinary pupil such a text-book as shall render a teacher unnecessary. The real problem is how the teacher may be best utilised in the interests of the pupils. No doubt the less the pupils rely upon the teacher, the better: a teacher has been really

successful only when he has, by skilful preparation, enabled his pupils to do without him. Thackeray says somewhere that the first principle of wooing is to make oneself indispensable to one's mistress. In teaching, the first principle is precisely the opposite. The manipulation of the text-book is one of the teacher's main ways of enabling the pupil to do without him.

The diminished cost and the increased effectiveness of multifolding processes have given a demonstration of the probable line of development of the text-book. Each teacher with initiative wants to make a sort of subsidiary text-book of his own. He selects the book that contains the greatest amount of matter expressed as he prefers it, and sets about supplementing this by means of his multifolder. The next stage is naturally to discard the text-book altogether, and to supplement oral teaching and demonstration by a liberal use of the multifolder. But there is a serious amount of labour involved, and that of a rather mechanical kind. The next step should therefore be to revert to a new type of text-book that may be elastic enough to meet the needs of different teachers. The problem is to combine in a text-book (1) the sort of notes that an intelligent pupil makes during a satisfactory lesson, (2) the matter that has appeared on the blackboard during the lesson, and (3) the stuff that the teacher has felt it necessary to multifold for the use of his pupils. Some enthusiastic teachers at present do prepare by instalments such a multifolded text-book. At the end of a course of lessons each pupil then possesses a text-book that to him is one of special value. When it is suggested that such a book should be printed as a general text-book, the obvious and

reasonable answer is that though it is admirably suited to the needs of the teacher who drew it up, it does not necessarily meet the demands of other teachers. Is the conclusion, then, that each teacher must go on producing his own text-book and painfully multifolding it? At before-the-war rates such a scheme was not altogether impracticable, for at a comparatively small cost such a text-book could be printed in each case. The pupils could have been made to buy it at a price hardly, if at all, greater than that at present charged for a bigger book containing a good deal of matter that is not regarded as necessary by every teacher.

Till cheap printing is again available, there will probably have to be a sort of skeleton text-book in the various subjects, embodying only the absolute essentials of the subjects, and provided with certain blank pages on which official and well-organised notes may be copied in by the pupil. This book should supply the dry bones—the skeleton of the subject; it will be the teacher's business to provide the flesh and blood, not forgetting a good supply of connective tissue. Above all, the teacher must undertake the responsibility of breathing into the whole the breath of life. The text-book of the present is lifeless enough, but its skeletal successor will not have even the semblance of life. The selection of what is to form the irreducible surd in each subject will be a matter of great difficulty. We can picture energetic disputes among the specialists, though probably not so energetic as one would like. A mark of the new teaching is the growing interest in the technical aspects of the teaching of subjects we have to deal with in schools.

The existence of the "subject societies"—the Eng-

lish Association, the History Association, the Modern Languages Association, and the rest of the long list—is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. So far from fearing the disputes of the specialists about the contents of the standard text-book, we should welcome all the discussion that can be stimulated. It would be a natural and useful function of the subject societies to determine the text and form of the standard treatise or treatises in their branch of study.<sup>1</sup> Probably the result will be a split into sections, each producing a text-book suiting the needs of its supporters. This would by no means be a regrettable circumstance, as in all probability it would be possible to agree upon a small universal text that could be embodied as the basis of each of the differentiated types. In this way each branch of study would have the advantage of an authorised minimum text and a choice of fuller texts, each representing a common point of view. No doubt there would still be a few teachers who could not find their special needs supplied in the general texts, and who would therefore have to fall back, as before, on their multifolders. No harm would follow. People of this kind form the growing point of their department of teaching, and their influence would be in favour of maintaining life within the recognised texts; for it must be realised that the established texts would have to be subject to periodical revision in order to keep them in touch with developing opinion in the profession.

One of the most striking characteristics of the new teaching is much more developed on the other side of the Atlantic than in England. This consists in the dissatisfaction with our present methods of estimating

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the work of the Classical Association in standardising the terminology of their subject.

the results of our teaching. It is not merely a matter of external examinations. Discontent with these is no new thing ; and if this were the point at issue we would have to claim for English teachers greater rather than less interest as compared with our American friends. It is not so much a question of what other people think of our work, as of what we think ourselves. Teachers are no longer content with general impressions of the result of their work ; they demand some standard by which it may be estimated. Put into technical terms, it may be said that they are dissatisfied with a purely subjective standard and are seeking for an objective one. I have already dealt with this subject<sup>1</sup> in a more or less abstract way.

But since then we have had very practical developments in connection with the testing of the ordinary school subjects. We have now objective scales of ability in Arithmetic, in Handwriting, in Reading, in Spelling, in English Composition, in Drawing, in Language ability. It is not difficult to see how a set of standard tests could be drawn up in such a subject as Arithmetic in its more elementary processes ; but when it comes to Handwriting, and when Professor Thorndike presents us with a series of standard specimens by means of which any given piece of handwriting may be appraised, we have grave doubts. There is first of all the difficulty of determining the standard specimens ; and then there is the difficulty of saying to which of these specimens a given sample of handwriting corresponds. In each case the personal "general impression" is involved. To standardise this general impression, Professor Thorndike took a thousand

<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address, Educational Section, British Association, 1912.

samples of handwriting, ranging from the best to the worst in the three highest grades in the American public schools, and submitted them in turn to forty schoolmen whom he regarded as competent judges. These, acting separately, were invited to arrange the specimens into eleven grades according to merit, the determining feature being a combination of the qualities of grace and legibility. The number eleven was chosen because previous experiments had shown that this was the number of groups into which specimens naturally fell. Each judge had to make his arrangement four different times, the specimens being shuffled after each classification. The average of the four results determined the place of each specimen. Thus, if one was placed twice in Group 4, once in Group 5, and once in Group 6, it was ultimately ranked as 4.7. Next, the averages for the whole forty judges were pooled, and the average of these gave the final place to each specimen.

Then followed the selection of typical specimens, resulting in a group of fifteen grades—numbered from 4 to 18—which form the Thorndike “scale.” In some of the grades the scale contains more than one specimen (Grade 16, for example, contains four), since the specimens, though regarded as of the same value, differ materially in style, and it is necessary that teachers who use them should have the advantage of choosing a type that is nearly of the same style as the specimen to be tested by the scale. Assuming, as we are entitled to do, that the judges were capable, honest, and interested in their work, we may admit that we have here an approach to an objective scale. There is, of course, the usual objection. Such a scheme involves the assumption that when we take a large number of cases the

errors that occur neutralise each other. Of this we cannot be sure, so the result is far from reliable: yet the scale is at least a step towards the establishment of a satisfactory standard.

The difficulty in applying the writing scale is great, but when it comes to finding and applying a scale in such complicated matters as English Composition, the case becomes wellnigh hopeless. The scale of standard specimens of composition cannot be applied in the same direct way that is possible when dealing with handwriting or arithmetic. Even if the teacher agrees with the order assigned to the ten specimen compositions that make up the Hillegas scale, he can hardly feel much confidence in placing a given piece of composition into its proper place among the ten. There are far too many elements to be taken into account, and if each specimen to be tested must be analysed so as to make the necessary comparison with the standard at all points, it may be said that after spending so much time and thought on the specimen, one could make the necessary judgment without the introduction of a complicated scale. Yet it may well be that after a few comparisons the mind gets into the proper attitude for judgment; and though each new specimen has to be analysed, the process will become easier with each case. The main value of the scale may, in fact, turn out to be the training of the teacher mind to judge according to certain more or less fixed principles, "by creating," as Thorndike says, "in the minds of teachers a mental standard to be used in even the most casual ratings of everyday school life." This rationally critical attitude, then, is one of the most marked characteristics of the new teaching, both in regard to special subjects<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent account of our present state of advancement in

to the general attainments and capacities of the pupils.

Professor Alfred Binet made quite a dramatic beginning of the standardisation of school subject-matter and pupil intelligence when he supplied his *Ready Reckoner of Instruction*<sup>1</sup> and his *Metrical Scale of Intelligence*.<sup>2</sup> Both of these have been severely handled by the critics, and it must be confessed that Binet has laid himself open to attack at many points, as is only to be expected in the case of a pioneer; though, on the other hand, his work is not so novel as is sometimes suggested. After all, his *Ready Reckoner* is nothing more than a tentative and deliberate application of a principle that, for better or worse, had been in operation for many years as part of the English and Scotch codes for elementary education. Long before his *Bârème d'Instruction* was heard of, the "standards" of the British education codes were in full operation, and were beginning to have an objective reference. People not connected with schools at all were getting into the habit of speaking of a third-standard or a fifth-standard boy as representing a definite grade of attainment. The "standards" had acquired the right to be so called.

In the matter of intelligence, as opposed to mere attainment, Binet made a nearer approach to breaking new ground; and though his scale has been riddled by the critics, he has at least the credit of a deliberate attempt at establishing a working standard of comparison. His weakness lay in the narrowness of the

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the testing of the ordinary school subjects, see *The Scientific Measurement of Classroom Products*, by Chapman and Rush. Boston, 1917.

<sup>1</sup> *Les Idées Modernes sur les Enfants*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

basis on which he built his scale. The large numbers that form such an important element in the American schemes are lacking. By multiplying the number of experimenters and of children experimented upon we cannot wholly eliminate error, but the plain teacher certainly shows a distinct preference for investigations that have a very wide basis. He may not be aware that experimenters fall into two opposing camps on this matter of numbers *versus* technical skill in experimenting; but even if he did, he would no doubt remain true to his faith in numbers. This belief in the quantitative is widespread, and becomes strengthened if the quantities can be represented by mathematical formulæ.

The longing of the new teaching for objective standards finds a notable satisfaction in the various correlation formulæ that enable teachers to establish, with all the authority of mathematics at their back, comparisons between different school subjects, and between the methods of teaching them. Even the plain teacher can apply Spearman's "foot-rule,"<sup>1</sup> though he might be sore put to it if called upon to justify its claims to be regarded as authoritative. It cannot be denied that there is a certain danger in using formulæ of this kind, for plain people are very apt to regard as final and irrefragable whatever can be reduced to mathematical symbols. It is sometimes forgotten that the material that is handed over to the mathematician must be supplied by human intelligence, with all its possibilities of error. No doubt the formulæ do their work honestly, and grind out results

<sup>1</sup> *British Journal of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 89. The subject is very simply and clearly treated in C. W. Valentine's *Introduction to Experimental Psychology*, p. 134 ff.

that are true for the material supplied; but the material itself needs to be tested. In the ultimate resort we cannot eliminate the human element. "Personal impression" may be reduced to its minimum, but we can never entirely rid ourselves of it. All the same, the correlation formulæ have introduced a process that is of the utmost service in settling points of debate. Given certain data we can rely upon the results. The state of mind produced by this certainty induces a new attitude to school problems, and imparts to the new teaching a tone that clearly marks it off from the old.

Hitherto we have been dealing with aspects of the new teaching that on the whole are favourably regarded by the great body of the profession. Now it is necessary to face a charge very commonly made that recent tendencies are in favour of what is contemptuously called a "soft pedagogy." Many teachers are almost morbidly sensitive on the subject of making work too easy for their pupils. All this special consideration for the individual pupil, this clearing away of difficulties and misunderstandings, this recognition of the claims of every member of a school class, all tend, we are told, to effeminacy. Some of the stalwarts of the profession are inclined to think that the new teaching has a tendency to coddle the pupils, to remove all incentive to effort, to provide for them a "primrose path." But there is really no danger. The "royal road" is as unattainable to-day as it was when the hoary proverb was in its first youth. There will always be plenty of difficulties to brace up our pupils. Surely there is no need to supply artificial obstacles after the manner of those who arrange steeplechases and golf courses, or even deliberately to retain diffi-

culties that at present exist. The maintenance of our absurd weights and measures has been over and over again supported, apparently in all seriousness, on the ground of the excellent training involved in struggles with such troublesome items as  $5\frac{1}{2}$  and  $30\frac{1}{4}$ . When all artificial difficulties have been removed, there will always remain an irreducible surd of troublesome elements that will give full exercise to all the energy and determination available among our pupils. When the young people have been taught to study, and thus to avoid waste of effort, there will always remain the great mass of legitimate difficulties that no man can remove. If bunkers and hazards did not exist in our school course we might have to follow Voltaire's suggestion about God, and invent them ; but of difficulties in learning there will never be a lack.

The place given in the new teaching to interest is always a source of suspicion among the old guard of teachers.<sup>1</sup> They ask : " *Why* should teaching be made interesting ?" The world, they say, is not so arranged that everything is made interesting for people, and therefore it is better that the schools should accustom youngsters to face the uninteresting, so that when they go out into the world they may not be unprepared for the troubles that lie before them. But this statement about the world is not quite accurate. Only people who are prepared for suicide have any right to say that the world is uninteresting. People may, if they like, say that it is unpleasant ; but that is a totally different thing. In the world, no doubt, we have to do a great

<sup>1</sup> The spirit of the new teaching, on the other hand, finds expression throughout the new *Cambridge Essays on Education* in a persistent demand that pupils must be interested in their work and encouraged to *enjoy* it.

many things in which we find no interest ; but this does not prove that our lives are uninteresting. Precisely the same thing holds in school. In order to gratify our interests we have to undertake a great deal of what is correctly called drudgery. The new teaching does not seek to eliminate drudgery, nor to make everything interesting in itself. Its aim is to give a meaning to the whole of school learning—to supply an answer to the question that lies at the back of the mind of all intelligent pupils, and must be suggested to the mind of those less gifted : "What is it all about ?" The new teaching does not seek to free the pupils from effort, but to encourage them to strenuous work ; does not seek to get rid of drudgery, but to make it tolerable by giving it a meaning and showing its relation to the whole learning process in school, and to the whole process of living in the world.

## CHAPTER II

### ENGLISH

BY THE EDITOR

PERHAPS the most characteristic feature of the new teaching of English is the recognition that the Direct Method is as essential in dealing with the mother tongue as it is in dealing with foreign languages. Speaking broadly, there are three stages in the history of the treatment of English in our schools. (i) At first the mother tongue was not taught at all. It was taken for granted that when a pupil came to school he could speak English sufficiently to communicate easily with his teachers and with his fellows. But no attempt was made to increase his knowledge of his own language. Indeed, the tendency was after a time rather the other way. Restrictions were placed upon his use of the mother tongue lest Latin should suffer. (ii) By and by it was perceived that in order to expound the niceties of the Classics it was necessary for the pupil to have a more critical knowledge of his own language. Accordingly, a certain amount of attention began to be given to English as a sort of auxiliary. As time went on, the claims of English to a firsthand treatment began to be generally recognized. But the resulting methods were dominated by those that already held the field in Latin and Greek. The mother tongue was taught grammatically, after the analogy of a language

whose grammar was fundamentally different from its own. (iii) Gradually it began to be realized that if English is to be taught as a means of communication, the best approach is not through grammar. Doubt began to be thrown upon the assertion in the text-books that "English Grammar is the art of speaking and writing the English language correctly." It dawned upon people that those who spoke and wrote the most effective English were not those most familiar with grammar, and the growing recognition of the need for an easy and accurate means of communication increased the desire to guide the teaching of English into ways that produced most economically the result required.

From the nature of the case, English inevitably takes rank as one of the most important, if not the most important, of all the school subjects. Mr. H. G. Wells goes the length of saying that: "The pressing business of the school is *to widen the range of intercourse*. It is only secondarily—so far as schooling goes—or, at any rate, subsequently, that the idea of shaping, or, at least, helping to shape, the expanded natural man into a citizen, comes in."<sup>1</sup> As the mother tongue is obviously the first and most direct means of intercourse, it naturally takes first rank among the teacher's tools. It was only to be expected that at first the method of sharpening the tool should be that to which teachers were accustomed in their work, and after all there is nothing wrong with the study of Grammar. So long as it is kept within bounds,<sup>2</sup> and above all restricted to its proper stage in

<sup>1</sup> *Mankind in the Making*, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> How many teachers know the meaning of such terms as Gnomology, Monology, Epoage, and Senteology? Fortunately

the school curriculum, it is in itself an excellent school subject. Once the pupils have acquired the necessary experience of the language as a working system, a going concern, they are in a position to examine it in a more or less scientific way. The postponing of grammar studies to a comparatively late stage in school life is one of the most striking recognitions of the elementary psychological truths that underlie the principles of teaching.

A characteristic tendency of the new teaching is exemplified in the efforts being made to correlate the teaching of English Grammar with that of other languages ancient and modern. The Joint Committee for the Unification and Simplification of Grammatical Terminology, which is made up of representatives of the Associations of Head Masters, Head Mistresses, Assistant Masters and Assistant Mistresses, as well as of the Classical Association, the Modern Language Association and the English Association, has issued a Report that has been generally approved by inspectors and teachers, and is likely to have an excellent effect on the organization of the teaching of Grammar. There is no suggestion of the revival of the rigid and mechanical grammatical drill of the old style, but the new teachers are realizing that since there is a place for the study of grammar it is highly desirable that the best use should be made of the time devoted to the subject, and that the results should be utilized in the most profitable way. What the Joint Committee urges

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no English teacher is likely to be able to tackle successfully the following problem from a seventy-year-old text-book on Grammar : "Now monologue the following exercises exactly according to the preceding specimen. Be particular to give the doctrine especially of the construction of the *agnomeclads*."

is that the study of English Grammar should serve as an introduction to the grammatical structure of foreign languages. Hitherto the grammar of each language has been treated as a thing apart, and the pupil has had to learn as many grammars as he has studied languages. By the use of a common method aided by "parallel" grammar text-books, the teacher is now able to carry to each new language the paid-up capital amassed by the study of languages already begun. Naturally English Grammar forms the base of the pyramid, and the new teaching is specially anxious to secure such a revision of the current presentation of English Grammar as shall provide an effective preparation for further linguistic studies. The Joint Committee is at the time of writing carrying on a vigorous campaign to promote the general adoption of its terminology as the first stage in the process of establishing a complete co-ordination of the teaching of English with the teaching of other languages. The spirit of the new teaching in English is well exemplified in the series of articles on "The Rediscovery of English" that have appeared in the *Times Educational Supplement*, and that will no doubt be issued immediately in book form.

While the new teaching of English recognizes that the only method of acquiring the language is by using it intelligently, there remains the problem of how that use can be best manipulated by the schools. To begin with, there are the two distinct ways in which the language may be employed, the oral and the written. The oral, again, may be said to have two branches, speaking and reading; for, at the elementary stage at any rate, reading is treated in school as an affair of voice, since it is generally understood to mean reading aloud. But it is just here that the new teaching makes

one of its most useful appeals. It complains that only one aspect of reading has hitherto been attended to in schools, and that the oral method usually followed has pernicious consequences when the pupils come to use reading as a means of acquiring knowledge or stimulus from books. A marked characteristic of the new teaching of English at the earlier stages is the encouragement of what is called "silent reading."

In dealing with the rudimentary stages of acquiring skill in reading it cannot be said that the introduction of phonic or phonetic methods is anything new.<sup>1</sup> The old-fashioned text-books on school management are full of elaborate discussions of the relative merits of the alphabetic, the phonic, the phonetic and the look-and-say methods. The fresh point raised by the new teachers is whether reading should be begun by oral methods at all. Recent studies on the psychology of the process of reading appear to support the view that by beginning with the uttered sounds in reading, the pupils are handicapped in silent reading by a set of lip movements and muscular tensions in the larynx corresponding to the incipient vocal expression of the sounds represented by the printed words. Teachers are sorely puzzled how to get rid of this handicap. Even the look-and-say plan does not bring relief, for in this too the words have to be named.

The new teaching is only feeling its way here. Among other suggestions offered is the proposal to begin our attack on English with writing instead of with reading. It is argued that in the development of the arts writing in some form or other must have come

<sup>1</sup> The learned in such matters refer the origin of phonic methods of teaching reading to a certain Ickelsamer to whom is attached the date 1534.

before reading, since we cannot read till something has been written. But even systems which (like the Montessori) teach writing before reading, do not get rid of the tendency to lip movements and other tensions, for whether we learn words by writing them or by looking at them in print, we still acquire the bias towards an incipient utterance, since we have to name the words in any case. The same applies to the most direct method of all, the method of learning words by associating them with the actual thing they represent or a picture of it. Indeed, it seems impossible to avoid naming words at the beginning stages. Accordingly, teachers are inclined to make the best of the situation by recognizing that reading must be taught in the first instance in connection with sounds, and that at a later stage it is necessary to secure skill in the rapid extraction of meaning from the printed page by what is now technically termed "silent reading." It appears to be one of those cases in which a certain amount of scaffolding is necessary in the first stages, even though it may be dispensed with afterwards. One of the best ways to get rid of the troublesome scaffolding appears to be to cultivate rapidity in getting at the meaning of a printed passage. The new teaching is accordingly paying great attention to the speed with which silent reading can be carried on. Experiments are being conducted to discover the time taken by the ordinary pupil to cover a given amount of ground, and tests are being applied to ascertain the success with which the information contained in the pages read has been assimilated. It is admitted that certain important problems are involved, not the least of these being that of "skimming."

On the other hand, it is recognized that reading aloud

has a value of its own,<sup>1</sup> since reading is not always used as a mere means of extracting information. Accordingly, the manipulation of sounds comes to have an important place in the newer methods. Things are at present, no doubt, in a very confused state, but there is at least the desire to organize the teaching of phonetics in such a way as to get value from the study all along the line. There is obviously a great waste just now. In many cases pupils learn the art of reading by means of a more or less complicated phonetic script, which is discarded as soon as skill in reading is acquired. By and by, in the higher classes in English, another phonetic script is introduced in connection with the study of the sounds of the language. In well-organized schools this same script is used in connection with the study of foreign languages ; but all schools are not well organized, and it is possible to have pupils struggling with two sets of phonetic symbols, one for English, the other for French. Sometimes a pupil is unfortunate enough to have to face still a fresh set of symbols when he takes up shorthand.

Obviously the new teaching cannot rest satisfied with this state of wasteful complication. So we are not surprised to find attempts being made to unify the whole subject by the introduction of a scheme of notation that will meet the demands of all the stages of study. Why should not the preliminary phonetic signs used in the Infants' Room form part of the system afterwards to be used in higher English and in modern languages ? The symbols of the *Association Phonétique Internationale* are at present widely recognized and used. Why should they not be adopted throughout our schools ? It may be that some modifications

<sup>1</sup> For examples see pp. 102, 135, 146.

are necessary to make them quite applicable to the new demands to be made upon them. But the results would be well worth the additional labour. Progressive teachers, indeed, are inclined to go a little farther and ask that a genuinely comprehensive system of symbols should be contrived so as to meet the demands of shorthand as well as those of ordinary language teaching.<sup>1</sup> This opens up enormous possibilities of development, and very probably the teaching of the near future in English, modern languages and stenography will show a marked advance in economy of time and effort.

With regard to the teaching of composition the characteristic of the new teaching is the throwing of the emphasis on the matter as contrasted with the form. It goes without saying that neither matter nor form can receive exclusive attention : they are inextricably bound up with each other, and any attempt to separate them is futile. Yet it cannot be denied that in the past the emphasis has been mainly on the form, and the matter has been regarded as in itself of no great consequence. Witness Locke's criticism of the methods adopted in theme-writing in his day :—

“ And here the poor lad who wants knowledge of those things he is to speak of, which is to be had only of time and observation, must set his invention on the

<sup>1</sup> For example, Professor Findlay and Mr. W. H. Bradford have just (end of 1917) published a pamphlet called *Sound and Symbol*, in which they describe a piece of research carried on at Manchester in the correlation of sounds with the various notations, in particular the correlation between shorthand script and the symbols of the International Association. They adopt the Oxford Shorthand as the most suitable for their experiments, but for the teacher of English the important point is not the particular script adopted but the possibility of a unification of the various methods of correlating sound and symbol.

rack, to say something where he knows nothing, which is a sort of Egyptian tyranny, to bid them make bricks who have not yet any of the materials. And therefore it is usual in such cases for the poor children to go to those of higher forms with this petition, 'Pray give me a little sense'; which whether it be more reasonable or more ridiculous it is not easy to determine."<sup>1</sup>

The new teaching practically adopts as a fundamental principle that the ideal state of the pupil in a composition lesson is to want to say something. When the pupil is brought to this state the battle is practically won. When he wants to say something, he will find a way to say it, and the teacher's part is so to deal with this expression as to improve it. The truth is that from the pupil's point of view stress should be laid upon the matter, while from the teacher's standpoint attention has to be concentrated on the form. We have seen that one of the fundamental principles of the new teaching is the introduction of the notion of immediately recognized purpose in all school processes: nowhere is this principle more definitely realized than in the composition lesson. When the pupil has the definite purpose of making himself understood he does his best to express himself, and as his mind is given up to the ideas he wants to express, he is not troubled by that self-consciousness that so commonly accompanies concentration on the mode of expression. In composition as in morals we want "a mind at leisure from itself," and this is best attained when the subject-matter occupies the first place. It follows, therefore, that composition oral and written is involved in all the subjects that the pupil studies at school; and thereby

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on Education*, § 171.

hangs a tale of struggle that leads up to a problem with which the new teaching is still at grips.

In the school curriculum the teaching of English has two main functions: (i) to prepare pupils to use the language as a means of ordinary communication—in this aspect English is treated as a tool; (ii) to provide a body of culture material—in this aspect English is cultivated more or less for its own sake, and the emphasis is laid upon content: English Literature stands out prominently here. In fact, we have the distinction drawn by Lord Avebury between knife-and-fork studies and those culture studies that for want of a better name we may call dinner studies. English is obviously either a knife-and-fork study or a dinner study according to the aspect emphasized. Now so far as English is a knife-and-fork study it is the common business of every teacher in school, whatever the subject he is responsible for. To a certain extent this is recognized in schools: that is to say, the teachers of other subjects (for shortness let us call them non-English) admit the need of having the English tool well sharpened because of its utility in their subjects, but unfortunately they are unwilling to accept their responsibilities in the matter.

An instructive struggle took place in America. About a quarter of a century ago the non-English teachers complained that too much time was given in the curriculum to the mother tongue, and asserted that English would come naturally through the teaching of the other subjects. It was argued that all that was necessary was plenty of exercise in speaking and writing the language in the course of their other studies, along with a limited course of more technical training in style and English Literature. The result was a

diminution in the time given to English. Years passed, and a generation of non-English teachers arose that knew not the old arguments and promises, but did know that the English of their pupils was not by any means what it should be. They began to complain, but on examining the time-tables they found that in the time at their disposal the English teachers could hardly be expected to do more than was being done. Then the ingenious plan was suggested that every exercise written by a pupil should be regarded from two points of view—as an exercise in the particular subject, and as an exercise in English. The suggestion was that the Botany or the History teacher should first of all mark the exercise from the point of view of History or Botany, and that the exercise should then be handed over to the English teacher for alteration and repairs. The English teachers welcomed the recognition of the double nature of school exercises, but they drew the line at being asked to become the Gibeonites for the rest of the school staff. This leads to a very pretty problem in which there seems to be a good deal to say for both sides. The botanist may say it is no part of his business to teach English. He may even wax modest, and say that he is not qualified for this work. But the contention may be dismissed, inasmuch as he is called upon only to deal with English so far as it is necessary to secure clear expressions of botanical facts. After all, let him remember that science is only a well-made language. On the other hand, he cannot be expected to *teach* grammar or spelling or style. Yet a great deal can be done by the attitude the non-English teachers adopt towards these matters. Some assume the altogether reprehensible Gallio attitude, and contemptuously make it clear that they care for none

of these things. All that is really wanted from the non-English teachers is the moral support of respecting these matters and indicating errors by a blue or red pencil mark. The pupil must be made to realize that English blunders count all the way round, and not merely in the English class-room. To be sure, in one respect they have this fact dinned into them in connection with examinations. For here English is twice, or rather many times, blessed. The candidate gets value for his English in every subject he presents for examination. Good English compensates for quite a fair proportion of lack of subject knowledge. In a written examination a good command of English with a poor command of, say, History or Botany, is a safer examination combination than a good mastery of Botany or History and a poor command of English.

Though the American teachers of English rejected the overtures of their colleagues, there is something to be said for the proposal, if it is supplemented by such an increase in the staffing of the English department as makes the extra work possible. There would be the resulting benefit of purposeful writing of English for the sake of the subject concerned, and not of mere exercise in expression. The business of the English department is to teach English as English, and therefore to bring to consciousness the process of expression. There is a certain advantage, therefore, in having exercises written from a totally different point of view, though no doubt the fact that everything he writes will sooner or later come under the scrutiny of the teacher of English will necessarily have an effect on the pupil while writing it.

Keeping to the recognized range of English, the new teaching is marked by the place it gives to oral

composition. In the older schemes, composition nearly always connoted written work. Now the subject is recognized as including spoken as well as written communication. Oral composition is now begun at the earliest stages in school, though it is not always known by that name. Matter is provided that naturally provokes questions and counter questions, and draws answers sometimes from the pupil, sometimes from the teacher. The interest in such talks is centred not on the form of speech, but on the subject-matter. Pictures are presented and discussed. Interesting and provocative objects are examined and talked about, comparatively easy problems<sup>1</sup> are suggested, and their solution sought by the joint efforts of teachers and pupils. Inevitably the pupils speak more or less in the style of the teacher, for imitation secures that they do their best to speak like him. In any case, they get accustomed to talk for the sake of the subject-matter, and to make themselves understood. Naturally the teacher must occasionally correct bad expressions; but this should be done in moderation, and in no case should corrections bulk as the important part of such lessons. Everything but the subject-matter ought to be treated as incidental. As the lessons proceed, pupils should be encouraged to make more or less consecutive statements. This must be secured by a

<sup>1</sup> For example, the question is put: Why do the owners of heaps of coals that are left lying in the open air have them whitewashed? The natural answer is that the whitewash serves to preserve the coals. But investigation shows that coals do not deteriorate in the open air more than indoors. "A more cheerful appearance" was suggested by one pupil. But the rest agreed that a coal bing could hardly make aesthetic claims under any circumstances. Insistence on the exposed position of the coals sometimes leads to what seems to be the real reason—to prevent stealing, since any coal removed from the surface leaves a tell-tale black gap behind.

gradual change in the incidence of attention, one boy being called upon for a more complete account of some part of the subject. No reference need be made to the fact that each sentence must be complete. This can be secured by expressing doubt about the subject-matter every time an incomplete or badly constructed sentence is used. The old-fashioned fetish that insisted upon pupils always replying to questions in complete sentences, had no doubt the defect that it led to quite unnatural forms of expression. In good English we do not always answer questions in complete sentences. But the complete-sentence craze had the more serious defect that it called attention to the mere form, while the matter itself is what is interesting the pupils.

Out of this discussion-method in which teachers and pupils both take part, there naturally arises, through a gradually increasing extension of the amount of speaking demanded at a time from each pupil, the exercise of independent exposition. A pupil is called upon to describe an object, explain a passage, relate an anecdote. Of these the easiest is the telling of a story, since the time element is a great aid in the arrangement of the matter. But the advanced guard of the new teachers are not content with mere narrative. They demand genuine consecutive exposition. For example, Mr. H. Caldwell Cook gets his Littlemen—all the world now knows that “Littleman” is the term applied at the Perse School to any boy under thirteen—to give ten-minute lectures to each other on subjects that interest boys.<sup>1</sup> He maintains that his method does not in any way tend to priggishness, though the style of the young lecturers is severely criticized by their fellows.

<sup>1</sup> *The Play Way*, pp. 80 ff.

Interest centres in the subject-matter, and anything (such as humming-and-hawing, repetition, trying back, broken construction, obscurity) that interferes with this receives immediate and severe condemnation.

While the lecture method as practised by pupils is still in its infancy, the method of dramatization is of venerable antiquity, but is being modified by the new teaching to meet modern needs. Even the repeating, with proper expression, of words prepared for them by others is a help in the training of expression. By throwing himself into his part the young performer learns the value of words, without thinking of them as mere elements in a school exercise. But when he is set to find words for himself to express the emotions suitable to a given set of circumstances, the pupil makes a distinct advance on merely delivering his lines. Mr. Caldwell Cook goes the length of getting his pupils to write plays for themselves. But, while still keeping to the oral teaching of composition, we find that the new teaching exercises the pupils by setting them to act a scene from history, supplying for themselves the words they think suitable to the persons they represent. This more or less regulated "gag" is found to be an excellent exercise in composition. The attention is concentrated upon the circumstances of the case, the pupil throws himself into the character he is personating, forgets all about mere composition and lets himself go. Before the self-conscious stage this exercise is useful, but beyond that it is apt to lead to a species of pedantry, though even here we have the compensating advantage that the pupil begins to study the powers of language from a very practical standpoint.

When we begin to compare oral with written methods

of teaching composition, we are apt to be led into establishing a false antagonism between the two. They are not to be set up against one another as rivals, but rather accepted as supports and complements of each other. Here we come across one of those practical investigations into method that are among the best features of the new teaching. As the result of a paper read by Professor Clapp before the National Education Association at Chicago in July 1912, the Illinois Association determined to test the truth of some of the statements he made in dealing with "The Amelioration of Conditions in the Teaching of Composition." He had pointed out that the excessive labour of theme reading, now so generally complained of, could be considerably lightened by the proper use of exercises in speaking, and had declared that the results obtained would be better, not only because the training would be broader and more practical, but because the technique of writing would be more carefully handled.

It was agreed that a number of High Schools should give two distinctly different kinds of courses in composition in the second semester of the first year. One squad was to have written exercises only, while another was to be served with a combination of two-thirds of oral composition to one-third of written. At the beginning of the semester, in the middle and at the end, all pupils, in all sections, were to be given written test exercises, and their papers, after being graded on separate sheets by the teachers in charge, were to be forwarded to the committee for examination. The teachers were also to report in detail concerning the conditions surrounding the experiment. The same work was prescribed for all the schools, and of the thirty

that undertook the experiment twenty-three carried it out in full and made a report.

The conclusions strongly support the contention that a large amount of time should be given to oral exercises in the High School. The combination sections at the end of the semester were better in thought—showed more vigour, freedom and interest—than the writing sections. They were more competent in point of grammatical and rhetorical structure. They were no worse in spelling and punctuation, and they were better in handwriting. The writing sections had deteriorated in penmanship during the period. The committee felt justified in recommending that oral exercises be made a regular part of the High School English work throughout the four years. In the first year, two-thirds of the themes should be oral, in the second year one-half should be oral, and in the two following years one-third should be oral. The committee also calls upon school authorities to allow time in the daily session for conference on oral exercises to the amount of five minutes for each pupil per week.<sup>1</sup>

Admitting the value of oral composition, most teachers are inclined to give it more play at the earlier stages, and to depend more on written work at the later. But what is of at least as much importance as the quantity of work is the quality of the results. Oral composition produces vivacity and vigour, and forms an excellent auxiliary to written work, but cannot by any means take its place. It cultivates a different style, and in particular develops a different vocabulary. One of the first lessons the teacher of English has to learn is that his pupils have three vocabularies—the reading,

<sup>1</sup> See "The Illinois Experiment" in *The English Journal* (Chicago) for April 1914.

would never use in his writing, and very many words in his writing that he would never think of using in speech. What would we think of a schoolboy who used the word *nevertheless* in his ordinary talk ! Yet we take it as a matter of course in his essay.

An important part of the work of the teacher of English is the enriching of the vocabulary of his pupils. The boy comes to school with a speaking vocabulary that must be taken as the datum of the problem of English teaching. It is home made ; and this consideration leads us to another classification of vocabularies from the teacher's standpoint. The home vocabulary and the school vocabulary are sometimes quite different. In the case of pupils from an educated home the two vocabularies practically coincide, but in other cases there is wide divergence ; and in cases where there is a patois in common use, the vocabularies are practically distinct. In extreme cases the school-speaking vocabulary has to be built up from the foundations, and the only satisfactory method of building is by use. Pupils learn to speak by speaking. So with the reading vocabulary : the great means of enriching it is by getting the pupils to read extensively. In a broad way it may be said that the writing vocabulary is derived from the reading by a process of selection. The pupil will naturally never use a word in writing that he has not met in his reading. Nowhere is the new teaching more differentiated from the old than in this matter of building up the writing vocabulary. The old schoolmasters laid great stress on lists of words. They produced treasures of words, gardens of words, forests of words. They treated words as the botanist treats collections of plants. In his un-

regenerate days even the genial Comenius produced a set of exercises with an accompanying vocabulary, the boast of the whole being that the same word was never used twice in the exercises. Our new teachers have given up this static view, and are all for the pupils learning the meanings of words by observing how they are used, and by themselves using them. We no longer go to a dictionary or a thesaurus for a suitable supply of words. We limit ourselves to words that we have met with in actual use.

It is true that Kipling tells us that when he was making his name as a writer he "dredged the dictionary for adjectives." But this did not mean that he used the dictionary, as an ignorant man might use an encyclopædia by reading it through in order to get knowledge he did not possess. Kipling used the dictionary as a means of recalling to mind all the adjectives that were available to him, and making his choice of the suitable one in the light of his previous experience of their meaning. Teachers of foreign languages are strongly opposed to the use of the English-foreign part of the dictionary, and the newer teachers permit this use only on the agreement that the pupil shall take no word from the English-foreign part that he has not seen in actual use in the foreign language. A quaint old writer<sup>1</sup> gravely dwells on the ease with which a knowledge of the animals of the world could have been attained had we been privileged to study them in the convenient condensation of Noah's Ark. Our newer teachers recognize that the only true way to know the animals is to study them in their natural surroundings. The vocabulary is to be enriched by a wide ranging over the works of very

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Habrecht of Strasbourg.

different authors, rather than by the museum study of words in a collection. The dictionary is to be used for purposes of clarification and verification, and perhaps for this particular purpose the new teaching hardly uses it enough.

In written composition as in oral the new teaching puts purpose in the front. Pupils are no longer asked to write in the air, on such subjects as *Death*, *The Seasons*, *Courage*. An attempt is made to get them to regard their writing as having a definite purpose, and as being addressed to a definite person or group of persons. Accordingly, the letter form is frequently adopted, and wherever it is possible to make an actual use of the letters it is excellent. There is always something very windy about writing a letter at large, for by the conditions of the case a definite person is assumed to exist, that the pupil knows does not really exist. Letters from one pupil to another are popular in the new teaching, and it is often contrived that some point of common interest to the two boys is discussed in this way. No doubt it would be much more interesting for Jones to lean over two desks and talk it out with Robinson, but the next best thing is to put it all down on paper. From the pupils' point of view it is, at least, a good second best as things go in school. A criticism of something that has been done in class is an excellent form of exercise, for the pupils often really want to say what they think of certain happenings. A synopsis of a speech given to the pupils is less attractive, but has at least the charm of dealing with something real. Yet reality is not so essential as the elements of purpose and meaning. Purely imaginative writing has great attractions for young people, because they feel that they are making

sense even though the facts described are known not to have happened. It is true that in the last resort the story the young writer weaves does represent a certain sort of reality. One of the great charms of imaginative writing is the freedom from all the restrictions imposed by lack of real knowledge. Pupils glory in the absolute freedom of being able to "say what they like." The wiser teachers, however, limit this freedom by permitting one major impossibility, and insisting upon all the rest being strictly in accordance with the ordinary laws of nature. For example, if the pupil is invited to write the "Reflections of a Tramway Horse," he is entitled to assume that the quadruped can speak, but all the adventures he describes must stand the test of conformity with common sense and the laws of real life.

While there are always certain pupils in every class that can invent a story with fair success, the greater number need a little help. Thus it comes about that the most successful exercise in story-telling consists in giving a part of the story and calling upon the pupils to supply the rest. Actual practice shows that much the easier form is to give the beginning and middle and demand the end. It is found that to give the middle and the end leaves a much harder problem for the ordinary pupil. Yet each has its function, and both have the great attraction of calling the pupil's attention to a real problem, where certain conditions are laid down, and yet where he is left a good deal of freedom in selecting the sort of solution that will fit the case, and also please him. Some stories, indeed, rouse the utmost enthusiasm when left half told. As an illustration the teacher has only to read Frank Stockton's famous *The Lady and the Tiger* to a senior

form of girls to reduce them to a state of eagerness to get their pens in order to express their view of the *dénouement*.

In all this sort of writing, while no formal teaching is given with regard to the principles of style as such, the teacher can, at all points, make the pupil realize that the purpose of the story has not been attained if doubt is left in the reader's mind about any point, or if any reasonable question cannot be answered from the narrative itself. The incidence is on the subject-matter all the time, but the relation between form and matter is so close that justice cannot be done to the matter without attention to the form. A time comes, however, when it is necessary to give attention to the form as such. This naturally arrives in its completeness at a late stage, but is gradually being introduced all the way up the school. Occasional exercises in form may be given at early stages, but this should be done only in cases where the subject-matter is supplied by the teacher, and is not of great intrinsic interest.

The older teachers used paraphrasing largely for this purpose. Now, in the hands of a skilful teacher, paraphrasing can be used with excellent effect, because he will choose passages that may be transferred from one particular style of writing to another. But too often the exercise is bad, for the obvious reason that if the passage is excellent literature, as was often the case in the old exercises, all that the pupil could do was to turn good English into English that was less good. The whole principle of *le mot juste* is flouted in every such exercise in paraphrasing. The main advantage of paraphrasing may be obtained from an exercise in translation, though it must be admitted that in this case we have not the lesson that is always

learned from an analysis of an admirable passage in the mother tongue. It is for this reason that another form of paraphrasing is objectionable, the form in which a piece of slovenly English is set. In the highest forms this application of the "awful example" may be used on very rare occasions, as a means of pointing some definite criticisms ; but we usually find that more than sufficient exemplification of errors is to be found in the work of the pupils themselves. Perhaps the best form of paraphrasing consists in the turning into good English of a description given in some dialect important enough to be treated with respect, and yet different enough from current English to leave scope for a complete change of expression.

When it comes to the actual marking of written compositions the new teaching takes a firm stand against the grinding methods of the past, that oppressed generations of toiling teachers. "Writing in" corrections is frowned down. Let the pupil see to that. The teacher is encouraged to prepare a careful list of conventional marks, after the pattern of the symbols of proof-readers for the press, and to leave to the pupil the task of reading his own proofs. In the University of California, for example, where the students run a co-operative store for the supply of books and apparatus, the writing-pads on which compositions are written are provided with a table of some forty conventional correction-marks with their meanings, so that master and pupil have the minimum amount of trouble. It is true that the more fundamental question may still be raised : Should compositions be corrected at all ? Some teachers maintain that the important thing is the writing of the exercise, and that in the course of a few months the student is himself in a position to correct

his own themes. One master of my acquaintance, for example, systematically keeps the unread essays of his form for four or five months, and then returns them to their authors for criticism and amendment. He maintains that they learn more from this than from the teacher's meticulous correction of work as it is presented.

The new teaching is not quite ripe for this extreme measure, though it is not unduly shocked at the proposal. It recognizes that the time element is of the essence of the problem of correction, and that short range and long range have each special advantage. No doubt the sooner a composition is dealt with after it has been written, the more interest the correction arouses. The pupil still remembers vividly the difficulties he experienced in the writing, and is accordingly prepared to appreciate whatever guidance the teacher can offer for future work. It is for this reason that some teachers move about among their pupils while actually engaged in writing their themes and discuss with them in whispers the sentences they have just set down. On the other hand, the lapse of time sufficient to let the pupils forget what they have written enables them to come to the exercise again with a fresh eye. For self-criticism it is certainly better to adopt long-range correction. The wise teacher will accordingly combine both ranges so far as he finds it possible, but he will lay the burden of the work upon the pupil in all cases. His business is not to save the pupil trouble, but to make him take trouble. On the other hand, the policy of heaping up unmarked exercises in a cupboard is indefensible. The policy of marking carefully only a definite proportion of exercises sent in is little better. The pupil is entitled to expect that whatever

he has written will be recognized and looked at. It does not follow that the teacher is expected to spend much time over it: all that is required is that the pupil be made to feel that the exercise counts, and is part of an intelligent system. Nothing impresses upon the pupil the importance of his written work more vividly than the amount of trouble thrown upon him in its correction.

There remains the problem of valuation. On what principles is the teacher to rank the work submitted? Is there such a thing as a standard by which to estimate the work of individual pupils? Most teachers admit quite candidly that they do not think there is. The new teaching is reluctant to concede the point, and has made attempts to develop a scale by which written compositions may be judged. It cannot be said that they are successful. One scale—known from its author's name as the Hillegas—supplies ten specimen compositions, and the teacher is expected to find which of these most nearly corresponds in merit to a particular composition paper and to rank that paper accordingly. But no experienced teacher has any hope from help of this kind. The various points to be taken account of are so numerous that comparison is practically impossible. To begin with, the ten specimens include all kinds of composition, and the teacher may be called upon to determine the rank of a narrative by comparing it with an argument. To meet this difficulty the Harvard-Newton scale was invented, in which we have four separate scales, each to correspond to one of the four forms of composition recognized in the eighth grade of American schools: description, narration, argumentation, exposition. Each of the standard specimens is accompanied by a criticism in which the

merits and defects of the composition are indicated, and a comparison made to show why it is placed above the one below it and below the one above it. We have here an advance on the Hillegas scale, and further investigation may gather still more useful specimens. All this is to the good, but teachers will at the end of the day still have to depend mainly upon their own judgment and their knowledge of the local conditions and the powers of the pupils concerned. The new teaching recognizes the value of an objective standard where it can be set up, and of an approach to one where it cannot, as in this case. After all, it is not quite essential that we should be able to rank compositions in order of merit. What we aim at is to make our pupils capable of using effectively their mother tongue. The grading of them is valuable mainly because it draws our attention to certain elements in their work that might otherwise escape our notice. To make and apply a scale is an excellent exercise for any teacher. Whether a successful scale is evolved or not, the pupils get the benefit of the teacher's work.

When it comes to English Literature we find that the radical difference between the old teaching and the new is that we have passed from books about books to the books themselves. The mass of books that make up English Literature is so vast that it is not surprising that teachers quailed before it, and sought refuge in text-books that gave a summary account of the unmanageable whole. The result was that instead of English Literature the pupils were called upon to study the history of English Literature, with the result that they acquired a more or less slight acquaintance with the lives of certain authors, and a fairly clear general impression of

the sort of books they had written. The feebler teachers confined themselves to synopses of the contents of the various great books, but the more enterprising sought to bring their pupils into touch with the actual texts by means of extracts, after the manner of the University lecturer. Books of extracts were also used, but as a rule they were too short to be effective. The ordinary "Literary Reader" was roundly condemned by the more advanced teachers, and the wider scope of such books as Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature* was not sufficiently utilized. Dependence was placed on the intensive study of one or two masterpieces, on the principle of *ex pede herculem*. But the intensiveness was overdone. Thirty-page texts were published, swollen into a big book containing ten times as much matter in the form of introductions and notes. Nothing is more refreshing in the history of educational method than the flood of invective these overladen texts have drawn out from exasperated teachers possessed of real literary appreciation. The explanation of the long reign of the over-annotated text lies in the fact that anybody can teach literature in this way, and in particular anybody can examine on it. Between them, mechanical teachers and more mechanical examiners have been able to keep the bad system in being, long after its dangers had been fully exposed and even generally admitted. We are not so much surprised at the long resistance of the note-makers when we realize the difficulties that lie in the path of the new teaching that seeks a more rational way. The problem is to get the pupils to read for themselves with intelligence and zest. Any one with a fair degree of firmness can cram into a more or less unwilling pupil

a certain amount of "facts." But when it comes to making the pupil take an active and interested part in the process of studying English Literature we are faced by a problem of extraordinary difficulty. The new teaching deals with it under the name of appreciation.<sup>1</sup> We may order a pupil to learn by heart a passage that we consider to be of great beauty, but we recognize that it would be ridiculous to order him to like it. So far as appreciation is concerned, the teacher is too frequently reduced to the state sarcastically described by Jacotot in his definition of a teacher as "one who goes about wringing his hands and saying to the pupils 'Don't you see? Don't you see?'"

Still the problem is not altogether insoluble. The teacher has at his command certain forces, some of them legitimate, others not. Perhaps the least palatable of the small-print aids to be found at the foot of a difficult page is "Note the beauty of this passage." Disappointed in his hope of some real help, the pupil is inclined to take an unfavourable view of the portion set out for his admiration. But when the master sets forth in resounding phrase the beauties of a certain bit of writing the force of suggestion acts powerfully, and is strongly supported by the desire not to confess to a worse taste than one's fellows. So we have a more or less honest endeavour to like what has for us really no attraction. The contrariant pupils, no doubt, will react in the opposite sense; but the majority of the class will be led into a more or less unwholesome acceptance of the master's view. Now it has to be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Lesson in Appreciation*, by Dr. F. H. Hayward, 1915. The sub-title is *An Essay on the Pedagogics of Beauty*, as it includes many other subjects besides English Literature, but the teacher of English will find it greatly to his advantage to read what Dr. Hayward has to say.

recognized that it is impossible for the teacher to avoid altogether using suggestion. Whether he will or no, his whole attitude towards a particular passage is suggestive. The danger is in making the suggestion so plain as to lead to a somewhat hypocritical attitude on the part of the pupil. What is wanted is the pupil's own reaction to the stimulus of the author's words. The teacher is acting within his rights in presenting a passage in such a way as to make the strongest appeal to the known capacity and attainments of his pupils. He is entitled to prepare the ground, and to give his author every chance of a fair field. He may even claim that there is nothing wrong in his letting it be known how he himself regards the passage—though this is sometimes questioned—but he must make it clear that the pupil's decision is to depend entirely on how the matter appeals to himself, and not on how it strikes the teacher. As an example of what is regarded as a legitimate preparation by the new teaching as compared with the old I quote the following reminiscent passage from an article by O. J. Stevenson in *The English Journal* (Chicago) for February 1914.

"We were reading *The Lady of the Lake*, and the subject of the day's lesson was the opening stanza of Canto V—

"Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,  
When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,  
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,  
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,  
And lights the fearful patch on mountain side,  
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,  
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,  
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,  
Through all the wretched storms that cloud the brow of War.

"It was a strenuous lesson. The stanza was torn to

shreds. Word after word was put under the microscope and examined as to its grammatical relation, its literal or figurative use, its precise shade of meaning, and its special appropriateness in the passage. I enjoyed the exercise, I believe, after a fashion, but I have a distinct recollection of my bewilderment after it was over, and my feeling that I should like to know, after all, what the stanza was all about.

"I remember, too, years later, when I came to teach the passage, with what a thrill I discovered for myself what the stanza meant, and set about to find some means of helping my class to see its simple meaning and to feel for themselves as they read it something of the pleasure that I had missed. I asked them to turn their books over for a moment and to imagine a traveller who has lost his way in the black night in a dreary mountain country. He cannot see the path, and is fearful that the next step will plunge him over a precipice into the roaring torrent below. Weary and disheartened as he is, what to him will be the most welcome and most beautiful sight in the world? The sight of the first beam of returning light? Yes, that is beautiful, but the poet says there is something more beautiful still. Look at your books and tell me what it is. Martial Faith and Courtesy's bright star. What do you think is meant by martial faith? A soldier's promise. Where does a soldier's promise come into this story? Roderick Dhu has promised to guide Fitz-james as far as Coilantogle Ford. To what does the poet compare the keeping of a soldier's promise? To the beauty of the first beam of eastern light when seen by the lost pilgrim. And now let us read the stanza again, and in reading it let us try, if we can, to express the poet's feeling."

However successful we are in dealing with individual passages as types of general treatment, there remains the fundamental difficulty of covering the immense field of English Literature, during the school course. Very naturally the question rises: Is it necessary to attempt to cover it? Can we not be content to deal with only so much of it as lies within the reach of the pupils' capacity, and can be dealt with in the limited time allowed for the subject? Even in the new teaching it appears to be pretty generally held that the pupil who leaves school at sixteen or eighteen should have a general notion of the scope of the whole of English Literature, though of course it will be necessary to content ourselves with sample work in many of the periods, while insisting upon a fairly wide reading of works from some selected period or periods. The new teaching recognizes the serious danger of hampering the individuality of the pupil by restricting his reading in English Literature, and yet cannot reconcile itself to the complete neglect of certain fields and periods. It accordingly falls back with some satisfaction on what it likes to call "browsing." This is the term that we use when we wish to look on the sunny side of desultory reading. Throughout his course the pupil is to be allowed, in an increasing degree as he passes up in the school, to read what he pleases so long as his choice is limited to authors permitted by the teacher. The hardier spirits would put the pupils for certain hours every week in a good library and allow them to read whatever they liked. A good case could be made out for this absolute freedom, if the pupils were in their turn hardy spirits and strong. But most teachers feel that a certain restraint is necessary even in browsing. And, after all, there cannot be said to be any lack of

breadth in the reading of pupils who have at their disposal all the books in English Literature that can pass the censorship of the new teacher. By this relatively free browsing the pupils in a school are allowed to read along their own line, with the result that in dealing in class with general questions in Literature it is usually found that among them the pupils can give illustrations from every branch.

It is recognized, of course, that while the browsing in school may be regulated, there is an external browsing that is not under the teacher's control, at any rate in day schools. Here emerges the problem of the penny dreadful. This kind of reading has to be clearly marked off from prurient stuff. The penny dreadful as such is usually merely sensational and silly. The injury it does is not positive so much as negative. It does not usually do actual harm, but merely takes the place of better stuff. The new teaching has not quite made up its mind here. There are teachers who say that they can easily tell which of their pupils read this kind of literature, not from their depravity, but from their wider vocabulary. Besides, there are all degrees of penny dreadfuls. When all is said, *Treasure Island* is only the best of the genre, and the master's *Sherlock Holmes* and *Green Mantle* belong to the same group as the pupil's *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* and *Caradoc the Briton*. Leaving out of account the *Dick Turpin* and *Wild Boys of London* type, which stands self-condemned because of its bad morals, the question remains whether sensational stories should not be tolerated because they encourage the reading habit, and may lead to higher literature. Ruskin, of all men, is called in as a witness on the side of the dreadful, since he preaches that we ought to be sincere

in our artistic admirations, and that we ought to present to the public we wish to train something within its reach but just a little bit higher than it would of its own initiative seek out. The recapitulatory theory is also pleaded in defence, and it is maintained that the penny dreadful marks a stage through which it is natural that we should pass on our way to higher things.

A strong argument in favour of browsing is that it removes the contrariant feeling that prescribed reading so often calls forth. Many years ago, at a literary dinner in London, a distinguished author dealing with the question of how it came about that modern writers had any chance at all when they had to compete with the immortal company of the Great Masters, reassured his fellows by maintaining that so long as the Immortals are set for school study the moderns will never lack a public. Browsing in a library from which the ultra moderns are excluded—not because they are inferior, but because their turn has not yet come—is the best way to give the Immortals fair play. It is sometimes objected that there are certain great authors that school pupils will never touch unless under compulsion. The out-and-out new teacher is inclined to reply that this very fact shows that these authors are unsuitable for the school age. The more cautious section are inclined to compromise and say that browsing has among its advantages the separation between works that of themselves attract and works that need the stimulus of the teacher's recommendation and exposition. But, broadly speaking, it may be truly said that the new teaching recognizes that there are certain types of literature that are permanently unsuitable for the school age, for the reason that they

demand an experience of life that is for ever impossible at that stage. It has no sympathy with the old-fashioned notion of making pupils familiar with texts that they cannot understand in order that "when they come to years of discretion" they may have suitable material at their disposal. It is recognized, of course, that pupils may profitably study books the full meaning of which they cannot appreciate till much later. What is barred is the sort of book that makes no appeal at all at the school stage. A boy may disturb his parents in the evening by his uproarious laughter over certain passages in *Don Quixote*, or gloat over the Lilliputians, while leaving to the future the understanding of the full meaning of the books. So, too, some of our poets may be read at an early stage for the mere sound and the surface meaning. But many books have no attraction at all for the young, and to force them to read works of this kind forms no part of the scheme of the new teaching.

It would be difficult to find a better expression of the attitude of the new teaching than Mr. Nowell Smith's concise statement<sup>1</sup> of the objects of literary studies as a part of education: (i) the formation of a personality fitted for civilized life; (ii) the provision of a permanent source of pure and inalienable pleasure; and (iii) the immediate pleasure of the student in the process of education. The Head Master of Sherborne thus turns back the new teaching to an old source, and plays the disciple to Tranio, whose "study what you most affect" has now been raised to the dignity of an educational principle.

<sup>1</sup> *The Cambridge Essays on Education*, p. 105.

## CHAPTER III

### MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

By LOUIS DE GLEHN, M.A.

IT is strange to see how slow our pedagogues have been to admit the claims of common sense in their methods of teaching, what inveterate theoretic prejudices have had to be overcome by those who endeavoured to press those claims. How often have reforms urged in the name of common sense been damned by such arguments as that they were not *educational*, that they were merely *utilitarian*!

In no field of teaching, I suppose, has the strife been more bitter, nor the confusion of the narrower with the wider conceptions of utilitarianism more disastrous than in the teaching of modern foreign languages. Indeed one may say it was not until Science came to the help of common sense and armed it with arguments which enabled it to meet the reactionary pundits on their own ground—that of Educational Theory—that it became possible to urge at all effectively the common-sense plea that learning a language should consist primarily in learning to understand and use the spoken tongue and lead the learner thereby to the enjoyment and understanding of the literature, as in the case of the mother-tongue. And it is thanks to the Gouins, the Viëtors, the Paul Passys, the Widgerys, the Jespersens, the Palmgrens and the long list of pioneers, who fought valiantly for this cause in the last quarter of

the nineteenth century, that to-day Modern-Language teachers, as a rule, whatever their practice, profess to follow this course, and that the British public, with its love of "labels," is demanding the brand of teaching called "The Direct Method."

Even so, the reformers of Modern-Language teaching, hampered as they were by the position of inferiority to which were relegated both the subject and its teachers, and by the appalling lack of co-ordination from which they suffered, not only as between Secondary and University Education, but as between class and class in the selfsame school—surely an unnecessary effect of our justly cherished tradition of the Freedom of the Teacher!—would probably have made yet slower progress, had not their efforts synchronized with the spread of the new principles which have revolutionized the whole of education during the last twenty-five years. These principles may perhaps be classed roughly under two main aims: that of adapting curricula and methods to the age, powers and needs of the pupils, and that of developing systematically in the pupils, by devoting greater attention to the individual, habits of self-training, and so bringing about that collaboration between teacher and taught which, constituting as it does a training in individual thought, is the condition of all fruitful study.

My object in the following pages is to give a general description of this New Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages, bringing out the distinctive characteristics of its theory and practice, so as to form a fairly complete and coherent whole. It is obvious that the complete picture is not to be seen in all schools professing to practise the New Teaching, and that the ratio to one another of the different ingredients of this

new mixture varies from school to school and from teacher to teacher, according to local conditions, teachers' idiosyncrasies and countless other things. Balance and co-ordination are difficult problems in *all* schools ; in many, far too many, they are still insoluble. To take one point only—the question of time. There are still a great many schools which, while professing to practise the New Teaching, do not recognize that it requires more time than was allotted to the subject under the old regime, or, worst of all, do not act on the now well-established principle, that foreign language teaching must be *intensive*.<sup>1</sup>

Such essential conditions as these I will assume in my account, as well as the following : competent teachers,<sup>2</sup> *i. e.* teachers that not only know their subject but have the requisite natural gifts and training for their task, suitable material—there are children who are incapable of learning a foreign language with profit—suitable apparatus, homogeneous classes of moderate size, reasonable co-ordination, not only within the language-course, but as between it and the other subjects, and reasonable external examinations, at the end—not in the middle!—of the course.

It will be best for my purpose to select the language-course as organized for the first foreign language studied, which in our schools is generally French ; for

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.* no second language should be begun until the foundations of the first are securely laid, and, in the Elementary stage at any rate, there should be daily lessons, however short, to ensure the frequent renewal of identical impressions, which is essential in the training of the ear and vocal organs.

<sup>2</sup> The supply of these is lamentably inadequate, and will remain so until proper training is insisted on, and both the University courses for Modern Languages and the professional prospects of Modern Language teachers become such as to attract the best brains to this branch of study.

that will naturally afford the most complete description of the method, especially in its initial stages, which are the most important from the point of view of the formation of right mental habits. Roughly speaking, the course may be considered as covering six years : *i.e.* from ten to sixteen, and falling into three stages of two years each—the Elementary, the Intermediate and the Advanced.<sup>1</sup>

The New Teaching of foreign languages has been given many names : Natural Method, Intuitive Method, Oral Method, New Method, Reform Method, Synthetic Method, Gouin Method, Berlitz Method, Conversational Method, Direct Method, Organized Method, etc.

There are obvious drawbacks to all such labels ; but the label “Direct” has the advantage, in my opinion, of expressing clearly, if somewhat roughly, at any rate the chief linguistic aim of any sound method of foreign language teaching, viz. one that will give the pupil a *real* command of the language—both of the spoken and of the written idiom—differing not in kind but only in degree from his command of his mother-tongue. This aim must be to establish in connection with the foreign

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to state the length of the course in years, owing to the variations existing in different schools and in different parts of the country. Mr. Cloutesley Brereton, in his valuable report written for the L.C.C., puts the regular course at five years—*i.e.*, 11-12 to 16-17. In many schools, and perhaps for the actual numerical majority of children in this country, it falls to four years, which compares very unfavourably with what obtains in France and Germany. In others, again, especially if the Preparatory stage is included, a pupil leaving at 16-17 may be reckoned to have had six or seven years. In any case it may be stated with certainty that the minimum duration of a course adequate to national demands (leaving out of count the preparation of pupils for the University) should be six years, with an average of five to six periods per week, a state of things rarely to be found at present.

language the same Direct Association between experience and expression as exists in regard to the mother-tongue. In other words, we must aim at developing in our pupils that instinctive, unerring language-sense, or *Sprachgefühl*, which we all possess in varying degrees in the mother-tongue, and which, superseding all rules, grammars and dictionaries, and resting at bottom on the Direct Association between experience and expression above mentioned, is the only sure guide in the use of a language, whether in conversation or in literature. This aim is primarily linguistic, but by that very fact it furthers the attainment of the cultural or humanistic aims of foreign language study which the New Teaching, no less than its predecessors, considers most important of all.

Now this language-sense, this Direct Association that we aim at, has its roots in the spoken tongue. Hence the most effective way of achieving our end is to make the pupils constantly hear and speak the foreign language, especially, at first, in the rapid give and take of dialogue, and therefore the spoken idiom must be made the basis and as far as possible the medium of instruction. "*Speech first. Writing and Reading second.*" Such is our motto. The ideal method is essentially an *oral* method.

This is one of the specific points where science has come to the help of foreign-language teaching. For the results of psychological research prove the important part played in the acquisition of language by auditory impressions and motor activities (*i. e.* the cumulative physical experience of hearing and articulation). The oral method therefore enlists in its service two more mental associations than did the old-fashioned method of teaching foreign languages, which relied mainly

on the visual experience derived from the written or printed word.

But this is not all. That language-sense (*Sprachgefühl*) of which I have spoken—the sense for an exact correspondence between thought and expression—is most subtly linked with the physical experience of hearing and articulating living speech, wherein, by dint of repetition, a direct association is established between certain groups of speech sounds and certain physical, mental and moral experiences.

This brings us to a second distinctive principle of the ideal method, one which, equally with the first—the oral principle—is determined by the aim formulated above. This second principle is that, to ensure the direct association just mentioned between experience and expression no rival speech sounds must intervene. In other words, the moment the experience in question is clearly apprehended, the mother-tongue must be banished: *i. e.* translation as a means of assimilating new language-forms by practice is barred.<sup>1</sup> If our

<sup>1</sup> This categorical statement requires some explanation. It expresses an ideal, an ultimate aim. Only fanatics would maintain that the mother-tongue is never to be used in the foreign language lesson, as is done I believe in Berlitz schools. But it makes all the difference, in practice, whether the teacher aims at avoiding its use whenever possible or at allowing its use whenever it seems necessary. The important point is to do nothing to develop or encourage the habit of translation; and in this connection it should be noted that the danger to be avoided is the intervening of the mother-tongue between the foreign expression and the idea, not, in Mr. Kirkman's happy phrase, its "*supereening*" (vid. *The Teaching of Foreign Languages*, Clive), which of course is unavoidable, and may often be welcomed as proof that the correct direct association has been formed. It is obviously in the interpretation of new material that it is most difficult to avoid the intrusion of the mother-tongue, and while most teachers are agreed that it must be banished from the processes of assimilation and reproduction, there is much divergence of practice in that of interpretation, some aiming

pupils habitually make use of translational methods in learning and practising new language forms, they will naturally have a tendency to translate when they subsequently hear and read them or want to use them. If, on the other hand, we carefully banish translation from the learning and practice, they contract the habit of Direct Association, which will tend to make them *understand directly* what they hear and read, and *express directly* what is in their mind, provided it is within their linguistic range. In other words, the means employed for driving home new linguistic material must be as *direct* as in the acquisition of the mother-tongue, instead of introducing the mother-tongue as a regular link between expression and experience, and so keeping them apart.

Thus the term "Direct Method" is justified not only by the aim which it keeps in view, but by the means it employs to achieve it.<sup>1</sup>

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deliberately at eventually eliminating the mother-tongue altogether from this part of the work, whereas others make a point of using it freely or at any rate of testing comprehension, *after* the interpretation, by careful translation. But practically all reform teachers are agreed that the old-fashioned continuous *Construe* as a means of interpretation must be abandoned, as leading to the habit of reading off the foreign text in English, and very bad English too. In the teaching of Grammar, again, there is much difference of opinion, some agreeing with Jespersen that here too the mother-tongue can gradually be eliminated, while others insist that in so abstract a subject its use is essential to clearness. My experience is that Jespersen is right, and that only those teachers who aim at the complete elimination of the mother-tongue from *all* parts of the work, as well as from the normal class-room intercourse with their pupils, discover the countless subtle tests of comprehension which make this ideal attainable without any sacrifice of efficiency.

<sup>1</sup> M. Firmery (Inspecteur Général) says in *la Revue politique et parlementaire* (Oct. 10, 1902): "La méthode directe est, par définition, celle d'après laquelle on enseigne une langue directement, c.à.d. sans l'intermédiaire de la langue maternelle." Is not a term that satisfies the logic of the French good enough for us?

But there is a third principle of method which follows from the conception that the acquisition of a foreign language by a child must follow the lines of his acquisition of the mother-tongue, and which is closely connected with our first principle, that *Speech* must take precedence of *Writing* and *Reading*. It is in sentences that a child learns to talk, or at any rate in groups of words that imply a sentence. We think in "*sense-groups*." The single word is a lexicological, not a psychological, unit. It follows that our speech unit must be the sentence. "*Pas le mot mais la parole.*"

These three principles must inspire and guide all our teaching—they are the test by which we must determine whether to accept or to discard any particular device or instrument of teaching or of study.

But, at the very outset, we encounter a practical difficulty. This development of right habits in the practice of the mother-tongue—Nature's method—is mainly subconscious, and, thanks to environment, is practically a continuous process.

It is out of the question to reproduce in a school the favourable conditions under which the mother-tongue is learned—we can only count at most on six lessons a week for our work, and that in competition with the extremely active development and constant intrusion of the native "*speech-centre*." Is not this fatal to the working out of our principle? No—and for this reason: when the child begins French, he is no longer the same merely impulsive little animal he was when he was learning his mother-tongue. He has begun to exercise his various powers deliberately and consciously, he has imagination and, above all, curiosity. If, therefore, we can somehow

inspire him with a strong desire to speak French, we have got material of such a quality to work on as will enable us to save a great deal of time. By calling into play the pupil's will and reason, and by the systematization of Nature's haphazard method into a graduated and organic whole, we shall find it possible to compress into a relatively short space of time an amount of work—the “*translation of experience*”<sup>1</sup> into speech—which the same brain in babyhood took months to perform.

On the other hand, the child's vocal organs are still pliable, his impressions vivid, and his subconscious mental processes as active as ever—all which means that imitation and learning by heart will offer little difficulty. In a word, we have caught the child in the nick of time for realizing in our method that highest ideal of education—the co-operation of conscious and subconscious activities—of Reason and Instinct.

Now it needs but little reflection to see that the application of the three principles I have enumerated means a complete reconstruction of our conception of language-study ; it means that in the foreign, as in the native language, the power to use it is not the outcome but the *condition* of all fruitful observation and classification of its phenomena ; it is one more example of the vivifying principle of all modern educational reform : (the Particular must precede the General, the Concrete the Abstract, Practice Theory. *Erst Können dann Kennen.*)

There will, of course, be this great difference in our method as compared with Nature's method of teaching the mother-tongue. In the latter several years are spent in accumulating subconsciously the

<sup>1</sup> A phrase used by Gouin : see below, p. 88.

material for future conscious observation and classification—though even here, as is well known, conscious “induction” often takes place very early. But in our curriculum the two processes will occur at every step. At every step the acquisition of “particular” language forms by means of imitation and repetition will be followed by the induction therefrom of general laws to act as guiding principles—i.e. *short cuts to knowledge.*”

In other words, Nature’s method is for us an inspiring principle rather than an exact guide.

Let me give an example of what I mean. The child speaks fluently before it begins to read. Our pupils begin to read when they can as yet say but very little indeed. But the principle is observed, and not only in the first stage of learning, by making them realize the language first as sound, before showing them the written symbols, but also throughout the subsequent course of study, by making them continue to regard all writing or printing as implying speech sounds. Or, again, take the inflections of the verb. Our pupils are led to make helpful generalizations from the very beginning just exactly in the measure that each forward step in the use of the verb makes possible. The first is one concerned only with sound, viz., that *je*, *tu* and *il* (*elle*) are as a rule followed by the same form (I am, of course, only speaking of the Present tense), and that *nous* and *vous* are followed by the endings *-ons* and *-ez* respectively. Later on, when spelling is learned, further laws will be discovered, and so on.

(This *inductive* teaching of the laws governing the structure and use of the foreign language constitutes our fourth principle of method, and with the other

three I have mentioned must determine the working out of the method in practice, if we wish to do this consistently.

The merit of language teaching understood in this way is that it does justice to the two aspects of language, the artistic and the scientific, each with its peculiar discipline or training in self-control.

The observance of these four principles of *Method*, the practice of this twofold *Discipline*, will be assumed throughout the more detailed exposition of the course, which I now proceed to give.

*Pronunciation.*—Before we begin the linguistic course proper there is a question which forces itself upon our notice.

Our first duty is to teach our pupils to speak. Therefore the foreign language must first be presented to them as sound, and we may only pass on to writing and reading when the habit of considering the foreign expressions as speech-sounds, not as written words, has been firmly implanted. This means that the first portion of the elementary stage must be entirely oral. But what of the pronunciation? For each successive day of study implants more deeply habits of pronunciation—good or bad, as the case may be. Therefore it must be our aim from the very first to get that pronunciation absolutely correct.

It is important to realize that this *can* be done, provided we do not rely on mere imitation, where the only check is the ear, but teach the pronunciation by a wise application of the results of the science of Phonetics: *i.e.* our pupils must learn what speech sounds are and how they are produced, and add to the checking power of the ear the constructive power of deliberately placing the vocal organs in certain

positions so as to produce certain sounds. This is the only way to counteract the instinctive tendency to assimilate the foreign speech sounds to those of the mother-tongue.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction to Phonetics will therefore take place in the very first lesson, and will be, of course, in and through the mother-tongue. It is obvious that in so brief a survey I cannot go into the details of this phonetic instruction. Various methods of procedure are in use in our schools, though there is general agreement on the necessity of a scientific treatment of pronunciation.) Some teachers make little or no use of phonetic script, connecting from the first the "nomic" or ordinary spelling with the sounds taught phonetically, using the symbols of the phonetic alphabet merely as a convenient means of isolating, visually, each sound. Others use phonetic script for reading purposes, but do not let the pupils write it, introducing the "nomic" spelling fairly early or even simultaneously with the phonetic. Others, again, of whom I am one, hold that a more or less prolonged period, during which all reading and writing is done in phonetic script, is the only effective means of securing a correct pronunciation in class teaching. The objections usually urged in criticism of this procedure, apart from the statement that it is not necessary—a point that cannot very well be decided without careful experiment under identical conditions—are that

<sup>1</sup> This is an instance of the way in which a rational method of teaching systematizes Nature's subconscious processes and by making them conscious makes them educational. Moreover, a physical exercise like the production of speech-sounds is a material for observation and analysis more congenial to young children than the abstractions of grammar. The task is adapted to the age of the brain.

it takes too much time and that it spoils the pupils' "nomic" spelling later on. To this I reply, that, as I hope to show, it is time well spent, and that experience shows the second statement to be contrary to fact, when the transition from phonetic to nomic spelling has been systematic and properly graded. Indeed, I have heard that even in the case of English the spelling of phonetically trained English pupils is actually better than that of those not so trained. The main advantages of phonetic script may be enumerated as follows :—

First.—The fundamental argument in favour of its use is that it compels attention to the *oral* aspect of language in the initial stage of study, when we want the pupils' powers of attention and reasoning to be concentrated on establishing the direct association between experience and its expression in speech-sounds; and it enables us to conform to the important principle of teaching "one thing at a time."<sup>1</sup> For, while affording us the advantages of reading and writing, it is in effect a simple, almost mechanical means of isolating *pronunciation* from *spelling* and of maintaining the precedence of the *spoken* over the *written* word. In view of this precedence it is important to inculcate from the first and to maintain throughout the course of study the habit of distinguishing between the two aspects of writing—the *phonetic* and the *nomic*.

Secondly.—It compels the pupil to go mentally through that process of sound analysis, which, as the

<sup>1</sup> I need hardly say that this phonetic training will not form a sort of preliminary purely technical stage, preceding the learning and use of the language. From the first, except for the necessary daily sound-drill, phonetic and linguistic practice will go hand in hand, based on the living spoken tongue, every sound group being carefully decomposed into its phonetic elements.

volume of material increases, it becomes impossible to go through *viva voce* in each case.

Thirdly.—For purposes of *revision, learning by heart, pronunciation drill*, it is the best substitute for the teacher, after the phonograph—and even in using the latter it is well to follow the phonetic transcript.

Fourthly.—The use of the phonetic alphabet in testing the pronunciation of a class by means of dictation cannot be overrated. The larger the class, the more difficult it is to test this. There must be a great deal of unison work in order to give each pupil the maximum of practice, and although the teacher no doubt becomes very expert at detecting errors—as does the conductor with his orchestra—still “*litera scripta manet*”; in a phonetic dictation each pupil *must* commit himself.

Fifthly.—I must not forget to mention also that the use of phonetic script has the excellent effect of keeping the teacher himself up to the mark in the matter of pronunciation, and we all know how necessary that is.

But one of the greatest advantages of phonetic transcript, and one which is as yet hardly realized, is the use to which it can be put for what may be called *auto-dictation*, especially in the elementary stage, after the introduction of nomic spelling.<sup>1</sup> It goes without saying that it is of the utmost importance from the very beginning of that stage to train in our pupils the habit of observing spelling, and to this end

<sup>1</sup> Hence the great value of elementary reading-books containing a phonetic transcript of the whole or a considerable portion of the text, like F. B. Kirkman's *Première Année*, Dent's *First French Book* by W. Ripman, Mackay and Curtis' *First French Book*, Calvert's *Oral French* (Rivington), Lady Frazer's *Emile and Hélène* (Macmillan), Miss Batchelor's *Premier Livre de Français* (Clarendon Press).

the home-revision of every new portion of text taught in class should include the learning of the spelling. But here the teacher encounters a serious difficulty. Left to themselves the pupils do not always use the best means of learning the spelling ; above all, they tend to use the eye to the exclusion of the ear, and to use the English names of the letters. Now, if they have a phonetic transcript of the passage to take home, and are told to dictate the passage to themselves from this transcript after learning the nomic spelling of it, and to show up the copy next day corrected by themselves, it is a strong inducement to them to carry out the teacher's instruction to base the learning of the nomic spelling on the pronunciation, represented by the phonetic transcript. Of course they must be penalised for mistakes left uncorrected, and they have to be trusted to do the whole thing honestly, and to use the French names of the letters. But that I consider to be an advantage from an educational point of view, and one which is rather characteristic of the Direct Method. We have to trust our pupils in so many ways ! And it is best to tell them so, and make them feel their responsibility towards us and, above all, towards themselves.

*The Elementary Stage: Series and Object-lessons.—* We now turn to the consideration of the linguistic course, which, as we have seen, must begin as soon as possible in the phonetic stage.

Since our aim is the power of self-expression, "the translation of experience," we can have no hesitation in determining the scope of instruction, the language-content of the elementary stage. It must, by definition, be coterminous with the child's own sphere, our pupils must "do and dare, be and bear" in the

foreign language, *i.e.* while repeating the foreign expressions for that particular experience.

The language-content possessed by the ordinary child of ten may be roughly divided into (1) the expression of emotion, (2) naming and description of objects, (3) the expression of actions and sensations which, upon examination, are found to belong to various normal series of actions and sensations—"happenings" that occur in a necessary order, viz. the chronological, so that in them the logical order corresponds exactly to the sense-order or order of experience.

It is to Jean François Gouin, whose remarkable but often irritating book, *The Art of Teaching and Studying Languages*, every language teacher should read, that we are indebted for this "serial" classification of language. He was also the first, I believe, to distinguish between the *objective* and the *subjective* aspect of language, according as it is the direct expression of the speaker's feeling or merely the statement of his observation, and to make a point of using expressions drawn from the subjective language alongside his "series," as a kind of running commentary on them—a distinction which is absolutely ignored by the grammarian.

For memorizing purposes, the value of Gouin's language-series in the acquisition of a foreign language cannot be overrated.<sup>1</sup> The necessary order

<sup>1</sup> Here is Gouin's Series of the Pump, belonging to the general category of Water. Its own general aim or end is the fetching of water from the pump, and is subdivided into three subsidiary ends: (a) Going to the pump, (b) Pumping the water, (c) Carrying the water back to the kitchen. These work out as follows (dots indicating steps that are omitted for brevity):

(a) The maid takes hold of the pail by the handle. She lifts up

of the several actions—the particular "means" to the general "end" in view—the inevitable way in which the verbs for these actions call forth around them a crowd of words, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, adverbs, the meaning of each of which is unmistakable owing to the context, finally the perfectly natural and indeed often inevitable repetition of many of these in successive actions—all this tends to fix in the memory all the linguistic phenomena concerned—vocabulary, inflexions, constructions—with the minimum of effort, in the minimum of time. Above all, we are indebted to Gouin for having re-adjusted the hierarchy of the parts of speech by putting the verb first, and for having helped to lay the foundations of "stylistic"<sup>1</sup> and of linguistic psychology, by insisting on the fact that the correct meaning and use of words cannot be learnt from grammar and dictionary, but only from the living context of complete sentences forming part of an organic whole.

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the pail. She goes across the kitchen. She opens the door. . . . She sets down the pail under the spout of the pump. She lets go the handle of the pail.

(b) She puts out her hand. She grasps the pump-handle. . . . The water rises in the pump. It runs through the spout. It falls into the pail. . . . It rises higher and higher. It fills the pail. The maid lets go the pump-handle.

(c) The maid bends down towards the pail. She takes the pail by the handle. . . . She turns her back to the pump. She leaves the pump. . . . She goes into the kitchen. . . . She sets down the pail, etc.

The following are good examples of books in which French is taught by the systematic application of the Gouin Series Method: Duriaux, *Study of French* (Macmillan), and Swan & Bétis' various books of series, published by G. Philip & Son.

<sup>1</sup> The name given to that conception of language-study in which the systematic study of the resources of a language as a means of expression, rather than of its grammatical phenomena, is the primary aim and guiding principle.

But we will not, with Gouin, attempt to press the whole of Life's experience into Series, not that it would be impossible, but because it would be un-practical and deadly dull! Are we to wait until we build a house to name the floor, ceiling, walls, etc., of our class-room? Besides, who would bear out Gouin's statement that to the child the whole of his experience is built up of series? Which of us has not seen a child of two or three put up its finger to point at persons, animals and things, and say, "Man," "Bird," "Dog," "Chair," etc.? In short, there are many things which it is more natural to talk about independently of a series of actions and to treat rather as constituent parts of a whole or as members of a logical group or family, united by some common factor such as place, use, origin, etc.

It is therefore wise to have, by the side of the series, object-lessons, in the widest possible sense of the term. (1) Series of actions expressed in words; (2) the naming, description and definition of objects; and (3) giving vent to one's feelings by the way—such are forms of language, the habitual channels through which we convey to our pupils the necessary materials for the building up of their "foreign soul."

Let us see how this will work out in practice.

We may say at once that the "subjective language," or expression of one's feelings, will take care of itself in the elementary stage, if it be allowed its legitimate place during the lesson and in the class-room, especially if, as recommended in the footnote on p. 79, the teacher aims from the first at making the foreign language his normal means of communication with the class.

Exclamations and other expressions of personal feeling may intervene at any point of the lesson, and a judicious teacher will know how to prevent them from interfering with the main teaching, and will build up in this way quite a large stock of language, which *all* his pupils will *understand*, while their power to use it, to make it pass from their "passive" to their "active" vocabulary will depend on their several powers. It is interesting to notice how readily this "subjective" language is picked up even by the duller pupils, just as it is in the mother-tongue, a fact probably due in part to the exceptional tone of voice in which they are uttered: *e.g.* Goodness gracious! Oh dear! Hang it!—not to speak of stronger expressions. This applies to all expressions of praise and blame, pleasure and pain, and to many commands and prohibitions.<sup>1</sup>

Turning now to the Series, it is obvious that they form a perfect instrument for teaching verbs—by far the most important part of the inflectional phenomena to be assimilated in the elementary stage. On what principle shall we select and construct them? It follows from what I have said above that we must combine two desiderata: keep within the range of the child's experience, and at the same time so construct the series that they shall contain the requisite material for the inductions most urgently needed.

In solving this problem common sense must be our guide. It is evident that our principle of selection must primarily be the naturalness and usefulness of

<sup>1</sup> *e.g.* Aïe! Oh! que j'ai mal! Quel bonheur! Allons donc! Oh! là là! Sapristi! A-t-on-jamais! Tiens-toi tranquille! Veux-tu bien? Ah bah! Tiens l'tiens! Parbleu! Dame! Je suis désolé d'être en retard.

the series, or individual verbs. Thus we are confronted with the necessity of introducing our pupils to all the conjugations at once. The moment they stand up, they will have to use a reflexive verb, and one whose stem varies according as the stress accent falls on the ending or not. Is it not madness? And the moment they move they will have to say: "Je vais—nous allons—il va—ils vont." Are we not letting ourselves in for a hopeless confusion in these young minds? Not a bit of it. The confusion is for us who know the grammatical scheme of the conjugations. We must place ourselves at the point of view of our pupils. The process for them at this stage is not one of comparison and classification of verbal forms, it is one of fixing in the memory certain isolated word-groups or sentences as the expression of certain definite actions actually performed by themselves or by others, the connection for them between these various sense-groups is not one of form but of content. So much so, that they will often not notice, unaided, similarities of inflection which seem quite obvious. The new sounds, however regular or anomalous they may be to us, brand themselves on their memories in proportion to the vividness and frequency of their own sensations, of which they become the necessary accompaniment.

Of course we shall, in obedience to our second, the formal or grammatical principle of selection, so arrange our series that they shall contain examples of the chief laws of conjugation, which we intend to make our pupils extract, by induction, from the series later on, when these have been thoroughly mastered.

It is doubtless open to the teacher to construct and to apply this instrument of the Series in various ways.

It appears under some form or other in most Reform French Courses. But it seems to me that we hardly realize yet all that we can get out of it in the elementary stage, not only for purposes of vocabulary, but for laying the foundations of that *stylistic* scheme of language which with us is to take the place of the deposed Queen Grammar.

Now, since action is to accompany the spoken word, our "content" is supplied, and limited by the scope of the class-room; but that scope is far larger than one would at first blush imagine, especially if we call in "make-believe" to our help. It is quite large enough to include all the important verbs in every-day use.

It is convenient to have one fundamental, all-important series, to form as it were the bed-rock of a scheme whereby one may teach bit by bit the conjugation of all verbs, affirmatively, interrogatively, negatively, and negative-interrogatively, in their most important tenses—present, past-indefinite, imperfect and future, as well as the imperative mood.

For this series a sequence of actions should be chosen, which recurs naturally every day, so that the association of speech with action may eventually become automatic. There are plenty of devices to prevent its becoming mechanical.

Take, for example, all the various actions that may be performed between the two extreme points of *standing up in one's seat* and *sitting down again*. It is easy to construct from them one primary series, variations on which may afterwards be invented to any extent.

Suppose we take for this primary series the going of a pupil (or two pupils) to the sound-chart to point to

the sound-symbols, while they are sung and recited by the class, and all that is done until he is once more seated at his desk.

It is well that such a series should from the first form a complete whole, and, as every series is capable of almost unlimited compression or expansion, this presents no difficulty.

But it is essential in the elementary stage to do as much as possible of the work in unison, in order to give the pupils the maximum of practice in the time at our disposal, and in order to give confidence to the weaker ones. Most series, however, can only be enacted conveniently by one or two pupils at a time.

How are we to reconcile these conflicting claims?

The instrument of "Question and Answer" solves the difficulty, and becomes the natural method of communication in the triangular dialogue, between Teacher, Pupil and Class, which henceforth, throughout the course, will provide a safe channel leading from the known to the unknown, keeping everybody interested and occupied.

Such a "Blackboard series" might begin by the four actions: (a) Nous nous levons, (b) Nous sortons de nos bancs, (c) Nous rentrons dans nos bancs, (d) Nous nous asseyons, the master giving the corresponding orders: Levez-vous, etc., and asking each time: Que faites-vous? Between (b) and (c), in obedience to the master's orders, a pupil goes to the Blackboard and points to the sounds as explained above.

Gradually we build up the complete series, with orders given and questions asked by the class in unison.

## Ordre.

## Question.

## Réponse.

## 1. For one pupil :

Lève-toi.	Que fais-tu ?	Je me lève.
Sors de ton banc.	"	Je sors de mon banc.
Va à l'estrade.	"	Je vais à l'estrade.
Etc.		

## 2. For two pupils :

Levez-vous.	Que faites-vous ?	Nous nous levons.
Sortez de vos bancs.	"	Nous sortons de nos bancs.
Allez à l'estrade.	"	Nous allons à l'estrade.
Etc.		

When this simple form has been mastered we introduce the other persons in answer to the teacher's question : Que fait-il (elle) ? Que font-ils (elles) ? and to the pupil's question : Que fais-je ? or the two pupils' question : Que faisons-nous ?

Eventually we have the following triangular dialogue.

Le Professeur (*ou* La Classe).—Pierre, lève-toi.  
Que fais-tu ?

Pierre.—Je me lève. Eh bien, camarades (*ou* monsieur), que fais-je ?

La Classe (*ou* le Professeur).—Tu te lèves. Eh bien, monsieur (*ou* mes enfants), que fait cet élève ?

Le Professeur (*ou* La Classe).—Il se lève.

And so on through all the actions. Thus do we obtain a regular system of question and answer, a mould in which we may cast any verb-series. It should be noted how elastic this system is, in spite of its grammatically rigid form. The parts may be distributed in various ways. Only one question and answer may be used, or two, or all three.

Finally, as soon as the pupils are quite familiar with the questions, *Que fais-tu ?* *Que fais-je ?* etc., other questions will be introduced, containing the interroga-

tive form of the actual verb, beginning with the mere interrogative form of the sentence, e.g.: Vas-tu à l'estrade? Où vas-tu? etc. Prends-tu le bâton? Qu'est-ce que tu prends? Où prends-tu le bâton?

It will at once be seen how such questions will lead in a perfectly natural way to the use of pronoun-objects and *y* and *en* and of almost anything one likes.

The different questions suitable to different actions provide us with a very arsenal of devices to prevent the series becoming a mere mechanical and thoughtless drill.

Only a few inductions will be required to make it quite easy for the pupils to learn new verbs in this way. In short, this "series"-scheme, evolved from the Gouin "series," is a perfect instrument for teaching verb-conjugation. When the present is secure, in its affirmative, interrogative, negative and negative-interrogative forms, the future will be introduced, in answer to the question: Que feras-tu demain? and the conversational past, in answer to the question: Qu'as-tu fait hier?

But long before that, indeed before the completion of the Blackboard series, and on its model, we shall have begun the construction, with the collaboration of the pupils, of an endless variety of school and class-room series, and the pupils will not need much driving to turn the class-room into a very stage. Very simple and crude acting will be sufficient to represent the various normal series of their daily life: Getting up and dressing; undressing and going to bed; meals; the walk to school and back; the school day; shopping; writing a letter; games, etc., and series that can be actually performed, without make-believe, on the spot, such as errands. These are the beginnings of free-composition. It is one of the great advantages of

the series system that it puts the pupils in possession of language 'moulds' that they can apply to actual experience.

But what of the object-lessons? The old-fashioned object-lessons in the mother-tongue have fallen into disrepute—owing, no doubt, to the pedantic and often too rigidly formal spirit that presided over them. But I have already pointed out how natural and simple a means they provide in the foreign language course for enlarging the pupils' vocabulary of nouns, by teaching them the names of a great many things, the presentation of which in a series would either be inconvenient, or long-winded, or too long delayed.

But it also provides a perfect means of revising and making secure the assimilation of nouns already familiar, for it is obvious that these object-lessons must be organized so as to form logical wholes—providing the first and most natural method of classification for the noun-vocabulary, *i.e.* the classification according to meaning, which must preside over our *word-grouping* in the elementary and intermediate stages. Furthermore, the object-lessons will offer the most ready means of acquiring and practising the use of numerals, prepositions, pronouns, pronominal adjectives and the laws of concord and position that apply to them—many of which (*e.g.* the inflexion of adjectives and the division of all nouns into masculine and feminine), belong to that class of linguistic phenomena which call for special care and practice, *viz.* those that have no counterpart in the mother-tongue and consequently imply a new linguistic notion. They will also be the means of teaching a number of *verbal expressions*, which by their very nature do not naturally occur in a series of events or actions (such as *il y a*, *on se sert de*, *cela sert à*, *cela*

*se compose de*, etc.), besides offering opportunities of practising the *comparative* and *superlative*, the use of the suffixes, *-ci* and *-là*, and simple relative clauses.

Finally the noun-groups will necessarily and naturally lead to the study of *synonyms*, that most essential part of a "stylistic" language course.

And so our pupils learn to make simple definitions and descriptions of what they see, thus laying the foundations for that process of explaining the new by means of the old, which will be found indispensable when new linguistic material is to be introduced, no longer through actual sense experience (by actions, objects and pictures), but through mental representations, by the printed text.

In obedience to our fundamental principles these object-lessons must be composed in such a way as to keep within the field of the child's normal experience. Further, they must be *comprehensive*, not *exhaustive*, and come into contact with the child's life at all points without wearying him by translating the whole even of *his* experience in each domain, as some Direct Method pictures do. It is far preferable to have a numerous series of pictures, each of which presents the essential features of some fairly limited field—such, for example, as the *Leçons de Choses* of Armand Colin or of Nathan—both Paris publishers. Another important point in their favour is that they are characteristically French. To dispense with correct local colour in Direct language-study seems to me as illogical as it is unnecessary.

In the object-lessons, as in the series, the method of instruction—the bridge between teacher and taught—is by question and answer. And here too, of course, as in the series, we must see to it that the

crowning point of linguistic acquisition is reached, *i.e.* self-expression, and give our growing French "baby" the joy of realizing that within certain limits he can walk alone. New arrangements and combinations of familiar objects, real or pictured, provide ample opportunity for this.

So far I have only dealt with what might be called the backbone of the teaching, the two main channels through which the child is made to assimilate the "content" (both linguistic material and grammatical forms), of which we intend to give him perfect command, for the "translation of experience."

But, enjoyable as that part of the work is, it is really the hard work, the drudgery—by which I mean the portion of the work in which absolute accuracy is aimed at.

This question of *accuracy* is a thorny one. Under the old regime accuracy was aimed at in abstract grammar, accidence and syntax. Even then it was generally not attained except by the best pupils, and rarely extended to the application of this grammatical knowledge in the use of the language. In theory grammatical accuracy was aimed at from the beginning in *everything*; it was the scholar's ideal, applied, or rather grotesquely misapplied, to the child. We now realize that there is a kind of accuracy—correctness of idiom, of sound—the attainment of which is even more important, and certainly more adapted to the child. This is the kind of accuracy we are aiming at, and that is why from the very outset we must inculcate the habit of *speaking everything*. *All reading, even in the preparation-room, must be articulate, however low.* All writing is in *theory* dictation. "Does it sound right?" must be the first and last, but not the only test. When

my pupils make the same kind of spelling mistakes that are to be found in French children's dictations, I feel that all is well.

Grammatical accuracy must necessarily rank second. Our chief way of cultivating it must be by avoiding opportunities for inaccuracy. The pupils must feel on firm ground—that is, they must feel all along that they have *something* that they know thoroughly, and on which they can rely, and to which they can always refer, as under the old regime they referred to their declensions and conjugations. They must have the same sense of security and definiteness in regard to their model series and object-lessons as they have in regard to phonetics and phonetic symbols. They must constitute for them a kind of concrete grammar, which they will have at their fingers' ends for testing purposes.<sup>1</sup> Besides, it is good for their souls to have always some portion of their work which they know they *can* do without a mistake, and in which this is expected of them.

But, as I have already said, this is our drudgery, our "gerund-grinding," and, great as is the difference between it and the old "gerund-grinding," the difference between the other less rigorous aspects of the Direct Method and the old exercises and "construe" is immeasurably greater.

The singing and the reciting of *songs* and *nursery rhymes* forms an important and delightful part of language-study at this stage. Everybody knows how a tune helps one to remember words, and there is nothing like singing for detecting bad and achieving good pronunciation.

But that is not all. "Any one who has heard and

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* pp. 108 (top), 109 and 125.

seen it, will testify to the vivifying effect produced on the pupils by an occasional interruption of the lesson for the purpose of singing to their hearts' content a simple song in the language on which they are at that moment engaged. And it must be admitted that such singing develops in no small measure in the pupil the sense that the language is not a dead subject of study but something alive and real."<sup>1</sup>

Many French nursery rhymes are games, or tell a story, or form a dialogue which can be acted ; and so out of these, by the same method of question and answer with which the *series* and *object-lessons* have made our pupils familiar, we can build up short *narratives* in the first, second, or third person as the case may be, or *descriptions* ; or we can construct *scenes*—far more dramatic these than our poor "normal series"!—in which our pupils learn without effort the foreign intonations and cadences, and all that constitutes the logical or emotional accent, as well as the dynamic or tonic (stress) accent, all so important and so difficult, especially the latter, to English throats. This kind of work, by providing opportunities for the practice of familiar sentence forms with new and useful vocabulary, constitutes the beginnings of Free Composition, which must, of course, be built up orally and with the collaboration of the teacher (cf. p. 115).

Then we have *Reading*—reading for pleasure—which is one of the great delights of the Direct Method. A very, very simple text is chosen, well within the range of the class, and with good pictures if possible, and is read "for the story" only, without translation, of course, except where necessary to make the meaning clear. New words and expressions are

<sup>1</sup> Director Palmgren.

noticed as they occur, but not "drilled." The chief aim is to reach the maximum pace compatible with intelligent enjoyment. At the most a few easy questions will be put on the subject matter at the end of each episode. Such is the "Rapid (*or* Extensive) Reading" which all Reformists recommend as being so useful both as a kind of general revision and as an incentive to further study. It is obvious that in the elementary stage it must take place in the class-room under the immediate supervision of the teacher, and always aloud.

Note that this division of the linguistic course into two parts: the *Intensive*, to be completely assimilated by reproduction and to provide material for the first simple efforts in self-expression or Free Composition, and the *Extensive*—*i.e.* rapid reading, with conversation thereon—can be independent of the books used, given a competent teacher, who will know to which treatment to assign the various portions of linguistic material provided by the text-book in use, and above all how to elaborate and supplement the "Series," the supply of which is often meagre. Personally I prefer to have the material for *Intensive* study in a separate book or even note-book (the ideal would be a book which would be gradually built up by the distribution of its pages one by one, as they are required), in order to impress on the pupils the essentially *oral* character of the Elementary Stage, where the material to be completely assimilated should as a rule be first presented in speech, the printed or written record of it being only used for learning and reference purposes.

*The Intermediate Stage: The Short Story.*—There is in children another instinct that is closely allied to the dramatic instinct—viz. their passion for story-telling.

This consists, essentially, in Narrative in the Past Tense, and the sooner we get to it the better. The introduction to it will take place towards the end of the Elementary Stage.

The foundation has been laid by the running fire of questions eliciting the successive actions of a verb series or the successive events of a Song or Poem, or building up the descriptions in an Object Lesson. The successive answers, separated from the questions, constitute the Narrative or Description, as the case may be, *in the Present Tense*.

It is obvious that this separation of our two instruments of instruction—Series and Descriptions—is unnatural. But in the teaching of French it is very important as a means of laying the foundation, in the *Present*, for that all-important distinction between the Narrative (*passé composé* and *passé simple*) and the Descriptive (*imparfait*) past tenses, which is all the more difficult to teach to our pupils that it has no exact counterpart in the mother-tongue. It is a new notion.

We must therefore, while still in the Present Tense, introduce into our series, *during an action or while action is at a standstill*, such questions as: Qu'a-t-il à la main? Que va-t-il faire? Pourquoi fait-il cela? Comment se tient-il? Où est-il? etc., and point out that the answers to these questions belong to the same category as the object-lessons.

But we want to get to real story-telling, and so, before the end of the Elementary stage we make a point of introducing, besides the Future, the colloquial narrative tense, the *passé indéfini* (or *composé*), and, true to our principle of basing everything on concrete reality, on individual sense-impressions, we do this by

telling our pupils and making them tell us in turn the "story" of a verb series, which they have actually performed, for example, the day before ; our object being that just as the *actual sense-impression* calls up the Present, so the *mental representation of the past sense-impression* should call up the Past Indefinite, in answer to the ever-recurring question of the story-teller's audience :

"Et puis ? qu'est-ce que tu as fait ensuite ? qu'est-ce qu'il a fait ? qu'est-ce qui est arrivé ?"

The same process, applied to the past definitions and descriptions of the object lessons, will bring in the *Imperfect*, in answer to the questions : Qu'est-ce qu'il y avait sur l'image que nous avons regardée hier ? Qu'est-ce qu'il y avait hier sur cette table ? Où était tel objet ? Comment était tel autre ? Que faisait cet homme ? Que portait-il ? etc.

Of course we shall make a point of immediately combining the two tenses—Past Indefinite and Imperfect—in any of the series we may have constructed that lend themselves to such interruptions of the sequence, and in the narratives (elicited by question and answer) of familiar scenes and stories told in our songs, etc., pointing out the correspondence of the Imperfects to the questions previously put in the Present, while the action was arrested, and leading to descriptions, explanations, etc., e.g. Où se tenait le professeur à ce moment-là ? Quel torchon as-tu pris pour effacer ton nom ? Pourquoi as-tu pris celui-là ? the question always giving the tense required (except where the answer is contained in a subordinate clause), so that the possibility of mistakes is eliminated.

Thus armed our pupils are ready for the "Short Story," which will now be our main instrument of

systematic instruction, at any rate during the Intermediate Stage.

At first it is well to select such stories as can be presented in consecutive pictures, or, if acted by the teacher, in a series of tableaux, marking the successive *moments*, or *steps* of the story.

The series of these "moments" will form, so to speak, the design or outline of the story (*le Plan*, as the French say), as actually *seen*, in the Present.

This must be thoroughly mastered before it is expanded into a more lengthy narrative, and will of course be first presented orally, the attention of the pupils being fixed on the central event of each picture or "moment" of the scene.

Care must be taken to insist on the essential verbs of the narrative, those marking the "series" or succession of events as distinct from any purely descriptive ones that may be introduced.

The next step is the expansion of the *Plan* into the complete narrative in the Present Tense: *le Développement*.

This takes the form of the reading of the *Développement*, first of all by the teacher with any necessary explanations (the pupils' copies being put away), and afterwards by the pupils. The teacher is careful to point out to the pupils, or rather to help them to discover for themselves, the nature of the process of expansion—what questions naturally suggested by the "Plan" are answered, what touches are added by the narrator to prepare the climax of the story. And again, as in the "Plan," the narrative verbs, constituting the verb-skeleton, are distinguished from the merely descriptive ones. In a word, it is also a lesson in composition, attention being drawn to the different

parts of the story: "*l'introduction—l'exposition—le noyau—la conclusion.*"

The degree of expansion in each story determines the amount that can be done in a single lesson. The pupils must get the new vocabulary and grammar in manageable portions, so to speak; for it is of course of the greatest importance that the assimilation of the new forms should be perfect. So one should not wait till the whole *Développement* has been read, to do the hard work of assimilating the new material (both linguistic and grammatical) by "Reproduction." At every step of the reproduction, viz. after every "portion" of home work, there must be a careful test, oral and written, first with the help of questions in the foreign language, afterwards without any other assistance but that of the pictures or acting.

I need hardly say that once the assimilation by Reproduction of the model version is complete, the best means of driving home the new knowledge acquired is to vary the form of the narrative in every possible way, e.g. (a) let the story be told by one of the characters in it, or (b) pick out the necessary number of pupils to act the story and say what they do, as in a series; (c) close the picture-books and have the story told with two main characters instead of one, to bring in the plural, a useful exercise not only from the grammatical but also from the common-sense standpoint; or again, (d) when the subject admits of it, have the story converted into a real scene, with only the natural amount of soliloquy and dialogue. This is of course a genuine exercise in self-expression, and will require careful watching and assistance on the part of the teacher; e.g. (c) and (d) may be quite difficult.

We now come to the most important stage, the transposition of the story into the Past.

The picture-books are closed, and it is suggested that one of the characters should tell the story next day to a friend, or should tell it in the form of a letter—or, if it be an event of public importance or interest, it may be conceived as a newspaper article or *fait-divers*.

The importance of this stage for the beginner is obvious. This is what we have been working up to by our "Series" and "Descriptions" in the Present and the Past. Here, as there, when we pass from the Present to the Past, he must notice most carefully the falling apart of the verbs of the earlier version (in the Present), into Past Indefinites on the one hand, and Imperfects on the other, according to their respective functions.

One should, of course, as above with the version in the Present, vary the forms in which the story is reproduced. If told to a friend, for example, it may lend itself to the dialogue form, the friend asking questions or making remarks from time to time—a far easier task, of course, than the real scene in the Present—*i. e. (d)* above.

In the beginning—that is, with the first three or four of these stories, it is well, in transposing into the Past, to make a start by working directly from the Present expanded Version, passing on only afterwards to the model Version in the Colloquial Past and showing how the change of speaker and of occasion naturally leads to differences in the conception and composition. The object of this method of operation is, of course, to develop the power of self-expression in original composition, which we must never lose sight of, and to

which we must now begin to give more scope than was furnished by the too rigid frames of our series and object lessons. That is why we will now be careful to avoid remaining long in the domain of mere assimilation by exact reproduction and make a point of giving at once, in however slight a degree, opportunities for self-expression. One way of doing this is, instead of presenting the *Développement* as a ready-made whole, to build it up by collaboration in class, either working up to a predesigned model, or leaving the class to select at each step which of the rival suggestions shall be adopted.

It is obvious that we must not use all the possible variations on a single theme. We must make a choice and not extend our operations beyond the duration of the pupil's interest in the particular story. But on the other hand, the proposal of a new version, especially a dramatic one, will often reawaken it.

About midway in the Intermediate Stage the crowning point of narrative will be reached, viz. the literary or historic form, in which the narrative tense is the Past Definite (Historic). This will be introduced by suggesting that one of the old stories be written for publication, getting rid of the personal element by substituting *Un jour*, *Une fois*, for *Hier*, *L'autre jour*. Henceforth the *Développement* in the Present and Past Indefinite will be dispensed with—in other words, we shall not pass through the stage of personal experience—it will be assumed that we have reached the second degree of mental representation: viz. invention.

The distinction between the colloquial past tense (Past Indefinite) and the literary past tense (Past Definite) is a most important one; and it is essential that the former should be the first narrative tense

introduced, because we start out to teach our pupils the spoken tongue first. We must also consider that most of their later reading will give them far more practice in the Past Definite than in the Past Indefinite. Care must be taken that any models of narrative given in the Past Indefinite or Definite shall be clearly defined as, in the *former* case, spoken, or written in the form of a letter, diary, or newspaper article, and, in the *latter*, as aiming at literary form.

When the literary Past Tense has been mastered by repeated Reproductions of this type, the building up of stories from a *Plan*, with or without pictures, will form one of those occasional exercises in real Free Composition that test the pupils' growing command of the language, but in which they must be carefully guided and restrained by the teacher until, in the Advanced Stage, they can be given complete freedom. The "short story" for Reproduction, on the other hand, will take the form of passages, as a rule in the Past Definite, which will be selected and treated in the same spirit as the stories of which I have been speaking, only the direction will be reversed. The story will first of all be mastered in the literary form, the verbs being classified into *events* and *states* in accordance with that all-important tense-distinction, which must remain a dominant feature of all Narrative Composition; next it will be told by one of the characters in the Past Indefinite, with all the changes that this entails. Or a dialogue will be constructed presenting the story in the Present, in the form of a dramatic scene. In any case, in connection with its first reproduction, the story will generally be reduced to its simplest expression, that of a *Plan*, a good training for that very necessary and important part of the Reading of complete

texts, especially in the Advanced Stage—summarizing the subject matter in the form of sub-titles, *i.e. a table of contents*, or in that of a précis or argument, *i.e. a short summary in narrative form*.

It will now be seen why I said that the short story should be for some considerable period—say from the end of the Elementary, through the Intermediate Stage to the beginning of the Advanced Stage—our main instrument of systematic instruction, the centre of the teaching. The Intermediate Stage must be to some extent the stage of “drudgery.” The Elementary Stage should point to the goal, and, by developing in our pupils, almost intuitively, the habit of “Direct Comprehension and Expression,” and giving them the power of self-expression within narrow limits, provide the necessary incentive for the hard work that must follow—the mastering of the grammar and the conscious and deliberate practice of that same habit of Direct Association. The very real difficulties of this transition from the more subconscious processes of the child of ten to twelve years of age to the more conscious work of the child of twelve to fourteen find their most scientific solution in some such systematization of the purely linguistic side of the teaching, as I have described, viz. Reproduction in all its forms.

Let the reading book—a book easy enough for fairly rapid reading—provide the pleasure and the advance in knowledge of the foreign people, their life and ways. And above all, let that text be simple enough to be read in the original, with only occasional explanations and, if need be, translations. This will provide the Rapid Reading which is the main constituent of the *Extensive* part of the work. But

let the centre of the teaching, the linguistic line of advance, be made to rest on a carefully graded course of Reproduction based on passages specially selected for *Intensive Study*. It is an advantage to have two kinds of work—the one definite, carefully composed and graduated, somewhat rigid and systematic, providing the discipline in accuracy in and through the "linguistic content" to be assimilated by the pupil; the other easier, more fluid, more intuitive, providing a pleasant relaxation for the pupil, and, above all, an opportunity of realizing his growing powers of understanding and "thinking in the foreign language."

Moreover, treated as I have said, the short story provides a perfect instrument, combining all the qualities to which importance must be attached in the purely linguistic part of the study. It gives scope to the child's imagination, his dramatic and story-telling instinct. For all its rigidness, it is marvelously elastic in the modified versions, which give a chance to everyone. Whereas the high-fliers can exercise their ingenuity in adding touches of their own, the weaker pupils can fall back on the original text or in the last resort on the *Plan*. It forms a convenient frame for the introduction of definite points of grammar, idiom and vocabulary, which we wish to teach, and offers the best possible material for practice in the application of the laws of inflexion and construction induced at every step, viz. material which the pupils can handle because they are familiar with its linguistic content, and which above all has meaning for them because they have realized, *i.e.* visualized, its context. In a word, it is an inexhaustible mine for the teacher in search of suitable "home work." Finally, you get with every fresh story the

full benefit of the keenness, and consequent attention, with which a schoolboy or girl confronts anything new. It is an advantage to have each story on a separate page or card.

“Reproduction” can thus be the main channel whereby our pupils are made, consciously and deliberately, to assimilate the foreign language; it marks the line of advance as regards “content” and “form” as planned by the teacher, and provides the pupil with that necessary stock of “types for reference,” which, in the Elementary Stage, was supplied by his series and object lessons, and which he must have in order to feel secure. In a word, it forms the *discipline* of the course, the strict “task” in which thoroughness and accuracy can and must be insisted on by the teacher, at any rate in the more exact forms of Reproduction.

Many teachers, instead of devising a definite course of reproduction such as I have described, find it more convenient to apply this treatment to any suitable portions of the reading-book. But I believe that in the Intermediate Stage, as in the Elementary, it pays to separate the *Intensive* from the *Extensive* work of the course, and that the use, for the former, of a graduated course of short passages, forming organic wholes, is not only the most effective but the most time-saving method of doing this.

At any rate the “reproductive” treatment of linguistic material, whatever method of selection be adopted, is absolutely essential to the true application of our fundamental principles, for it constitutes, predominantly, the means of acquisition by conscious assimilation, and yet includes within its scope all but the most creative forms of self-expression or composition.

*The Advanced Stage: Reading and Writing.*—If the Elementary and Intermediate Stages have followed the general lines indicated above, the pupil should by the end of the Intermediate Stage have his ear and vocal organs thoroughly trained: he should not only understand, but should (in both speaking and writing) have a fairly fluent and accurate command of the essential forms and content of everyday speech. In addition to this he should be able to read with pleasure and understanding the simpler and less abstract forms of literature. From a purely linguistic point of view he might be compared to the foreign child of ten or eleven. But this linguistic inferiority is compensated by a more advanced mental development. We can, therefore, expect him to read with appreciation literary masterpieces which the foreign child would normally read at the intermediate age of thirteen. In short, we now reap the greatest benefit of the Direct Method of language teaching—the power of reading, with *direct* understanding, what the foreign nation has contributed to the world's stock of thought and beauty expressed in words, whereas, under translational methods, the monotonous process of "construing" the text, and the *indirect* comprehension of its content, which this implies, makes the introduction to real literature a laborious business with little or no grasp of the content as a whole, and produces a distaste for it which seriously interferes with the attainment of our ultimate humanistic aim—a sympathetic understanding of the foreign nation.

This is another example of the way in which the acquisition of a foreign language on the Direct Method follows a parallel line of development to that of the acquisition of the mother-tongue, with results identical

in kind though not in degree. The habit of using the foreign language as the normal means of communication between teacher and taught makes it possible to reveal to the pupil the exact aspect and force of a turn of phrase or an expression by setting up intuitive processes for which it is essential to remain within the language.

To sum up, then, the Elementary Stage has been essentially the stage of *Speaking*, in which the *Intensive* work consisted in the expression of actual sense-experience; the Intermediate Stage has been essentially the stage of *Narrative*, in which the *Intensive* work consisted in the reproduction (oral and written), with endless modifications, of specially selected material presented both orally and in print; and now the Advanced Stage is going to be essentially the stage of *Reading and Writing* (i.e. the more original forms of Free Composition). That is to say, that whereas in the first two stages a constant and close connection has been maintained between the material intensively studied and the practice in both oral and written expression by means of Reproduction, in the third stage Reproduction will diminish in importance, and a differentiation will take place in the *Intensive* portion of the work, in proportion as the habit of noticing and assimilating new language-forms may be considered as firmly established.

This *Intensive* portion with its essentially linguistic aim will develop in two directions. The first will consist in the Reading and minute study of prose and verse passages, selected for their literary merit and linguistic content, an adaptation to our needs of that wonderful instrument of linguistic training that has been brought to such perfection in France—

*La Lecture Expliquée.* In this branch of study our object will be by developing our pupils' critical faculties to train their literary appreciation, and at the same time to extend their *active* command of the language for literary composition. But for the assimilation of the new material we shall not so much rely on immediate and complete "reproduction" as on subconscious processes similar to those that extend the command of the mother-tongue, on logical connection with previously established linguistic categories and "thought-centres," and occasionally on imitative exercises in Free Composition. The second will consist in the writing of all the various forms of genuine Free Composition,<sup>1</sup> often based on a preliminary oral preparation in class, in which different modes of treatment and arrangement will be discussed—in the foreign tongue, of course—and the requisite linguistic material marshalled by the collaboration of teacher and taught, in the course of which preparation opportunities will be sought of using the latest "treasures" furnished by the *Lecture Expliquée*.<sup>2</sup> The *Intensive* portion of the work at this stage must also include a rounding off of the classifications of formal grammar, the main lines of which have been laid down bit by bit, *inductively*, throughout the course: for example, the classification of subordinate clauses and, in connection therewith, the construction of a comprehensive scheme of the uses of the subjunctive, that important chapter of the study of French, where the "stylistic"

<sup>1</sup> Which in the Elementary and Intermediate Stages has been rather in the nature of a rare experiment, confined within safe limits.

<sup>2</sup> Most schools, instead of concentrating on Free Composition, as I prefer to do except for specialists, include Translation-Composition in this part of the course. But *vide* p. 123, footnote.

conception of language study transfigures Grammar into something intensely human and living.

But it is in the Advanced Stage that the *Extensive Reading*<sup>1</sup> assumes its most educational aspect. It is here we reap the full benefit of the previous preparation, and the habit of Direct Association which it has implanted, and that our French course acquires its full cultural value. For our pupils are now able to read rapidly with understanding and enjoyment great chunks of the foreign literature. We begin, of course, by introducing them to modern classics.<sup>2</sup> Where our primary aim is to give our pupils a serviceable and correct *active* command of the language, it is unwise to make them read seventeenth-century and even eighteenth-century works, before the constructions and usage of present-day French are securely established. This means that, with the exception of La Fontaine, who is a sort of standing dish throughout the course, little seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century literature can be read in a four to five year course (from 11-12 to 16-17) such as the majority of our children get in the state-aided Secondary Schools. The utmost we can hope, according to Mr. Cloutesley Brereton, is that when they leave school at sixteen they will have read perhaps a little Molière.<sup>3</sup>

It is true that, in some cases, clever pupils will reach the Advanced Stage in time to have two full

<sup>1</sup> With occasional writing of summaries and appreciations of the works read, which might be called Extensive Composition to distinguish it from the Intensive Composition work mentioned above.

<sup>2</sup> Of course many of these will only be read in the form of "*Morceaux choisis*," of which there are excellent collections published in France.

<sup>3</sup> Even here, however, a great deal can be done by Private Reading (*vide* below), provided the first initiation is done in class.

years in it before they leave school, and should be able to get a good deal of reading done in that time. But, broadly speaking, it must be admitted that the full cultural benefit of the course can only be obtained by the pupils who stay on at school up to 18-19. For these the Advanced Stage will extend into a real Higher Course of Study, corresponding to the new "Advanced Courses" recognized by the Board of Education under Mr. Fisher's Bill.<sup>1</sup>

We have therefore two distinct *termini* to our French Course: the first, ending roughly at the age of sixteen, aiming essentially at practical results, at equipping our pupils for an early start in the business of earning their livelihood. This in a sense is the more important of the two from a national point of view. It is only in recent years that what may be termed a national demand has arisen, that pupils leaving school at the age of sixteen should have a really efficient command of at least one modern foreign language, both in its spoken and in its written form, and, given proper conditions and methods, it can be supplied.

The other terminus is the standard that should have been reached by pupils intending to proceed to the University or to enter the higher branches of the Civil Service, and one which varies, of course, according

<sup>1</sup> The separation of the *Intensive* from the *Extensive* study in the Advanced Stage acquires an importance, from the point of view of school-organization, which should not be overlooked. It enables one to differentiate in each class between Specialists, who take the full number of periods allotted to the subject, and Non-specialists, who can take, according to their needs, various combinations of the Reading and Composition work of the Intensive or Extensive kind. It also furnishes the means of experimenting in a direction which may prove very valuable, now that we have to face the rival claims of several foreign languages—the possibility of confining the teaching to the "passive" command of the language, and so materially curtailing the course.

as they are Specialists or Non-Specialists.<sup>1</sup> Happily there are signs that the smattering of Old French and Historical Grammar that has been regarded as part of the specialist course in schools is falling into disrepute.<sup>2</sup> These are subjects for the University Course, and how glad University teachers would be to find in their students a *tabula rasa* in this respect, provided they found a real grasp of the modern tongue and a reliable general knowledge of the literature and history!

It will be still more satisfactory when our various examining bodies cease to demand from the Non-Specialists, in Matriculation and other school-leaving examinations, the power to *translate into* the foreign language and are content to test their command of the language by insisting only on simple and idiomatic *self-expression*, both *oral* and written.<sup>3</sup> Then we shall be able to confine the exercise of so-called "Composition"—translation *into* the foreign language—and the *Intensive* linguistic work to our Specialists, and to devote the few periods usually allotted, if any, to the Non-Specialists to a truly educational course of Reading, which will not only give them an insight into foreign literature, but will enable them to correlate the literature to the history, social, literary and political, of Modern Europe, and, by initiating them to foreign ways and ideas, help them to a more philosophical outlook on life.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* pupils specializing, more or less, in modern foreign languages, and those for whom they are a secondary subject.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the regulations for Part I. of the new Cambridge Modern and Mediæval Languages Tripos. <sup>3</sup> See below, p. 123.

<sup>4</sup> I speak here in general terms, for pupils who complete their school course will probably during the last three or four years be studying a second modern foreign language.

*Private Reading.*—No Reform teacher is worth his salt who does not aim from the beginning at giving his pupils a taste for reading privately for their own enjoyment and profit, and a foreign lending library is now an essential part of school-equipment. This requires much judgment and tact at the start. But as soon as Rapid Reading is well established in the Intermediate Stage the teacher will have little difficulty in discovering which pupils are ripe for private reading. As soon as the practice is fairly general it is a good plan to devote occasionally a whole class-period to the subject, the teacher going round the class to enquire how each pupil is getting on, make him talk about his book, etc. It is obvious that at first the book should be very simple, short, interesting and profusely illustrated. *Les Livres Roses*, published by Larousse, are very suitable for this early stage. I need hardly point out how invaluable this reading will be as a means both of strengthening and extending the command of the language. But by the time the Advanced Stage is reached Private Reading should form one of the teacher's most powerful allies in giving the pupils that cultural expansion which is our ultimate aim, and the awakening to which, in the better pupils, often takes place before the age of sixteen. It is then that each pupil will naturally adapt his reading, under his teacher's guidance, to his individual bias—literary, historical, scientific, artistic, political. Every school should take in one or more foreign weeklies or monthlies, and pupils who frequent the town public library will soon find their way to the foreign newspapers on view. I need only mention in passing the cultural value of lectures and theatrical performances in the foreign tongue. But next to

Private Reading, the most valuable expedient of all is one from which we are debarred in war-time, viz. a visit to the foreign country. Thanks to the Society for the Exchange of Children,<sup>1</sup> this is now within the reach of the humblest purses, and the results obtained are often quite extraordinary, especially if children are sent abroad only when their pronunciation is secure and they are beginning to feel at home in the language. One of the most far-reaching of these results is the lasting friendships that are thus formed between the families of the exchanged children.

A brief reference must here be made to Translation, and the teaching of Grammar and of History. To take the last first, it is still very much an open question, and one which is exercising the minds of history and modern-language teachers, how far, on the one hand, the foreign history can actually be taught and studied in the foreign language, and how, on the other, correlation of the language course to the history course can best be achieved, though we are all agreed that some knowledge of the building up of the foreign nationality, of its outstanding epochs and individuals, is essential to our cultural aim. But there is still much divergence of opinion as to what is practicable. In many schools even the stage of experiment has hardly begun. The following points, however, are worth noting. The whole question, of course, is largely one of time and of teaching material. In a four to five year course all that can be done is to use to some extent, for Rapid Reading, texts illustrative of the history, and, in the second and third years, books specially written for this purpose, such as Lady Frazer's and F. B. Kirkman's *Elementary Texts*

<sup>1</sup> Secretary, Miss Batchelor, Bedford College, Regent's Park, N.W.

bearing on *French History*, L. Chouville's *En Douce France*, M. Poole's *Lectures Historiques*, R. Adair's *Historical Reader*, etc.

On the other hand, Specialists preparing for University scholarships in History, Modern Languages or both<sup>1</sup> should have no difficulty in finding the time necessary to acquire, by private reading under the teacher's guidance, a real grasp of the history of the peoples whose languages they are studying. In French the number of excellent manuals published for French schools is of great assistance. But between these two extremes the possibilities are infinite. For further details I would refer the reader to H. L. Hutton's able and inspiring article, "History and the Modern Humanities," in the *Journal of Education* Dec. 1916.

Turning to the subject of Translation, it must not be thought that because the use of the mother-tongue is barred in the *assimilation* of new material, the practice of translation *from* the foreign language is banished from the Direct Method course. On the contrary, it is welcomed as an occasional test of *Sprachgefühl*, a pleasant diversion from the usual routine, an essentially artistic exercise in which the pupil has the opportunity of proving that he has not only grasped the exact logical content of a given sentence but has received the right impression, has perceived the particular aspect of the idea presented.

We have only to apply the root principle of the Direct Method—viz. that the direct association is the

<sup>1</sup> It is to be hoped that the new Advanced Courses, under Mr. Fisher's Bill, will encourage the combination of History and one modern foreign language as a special course of study, and that the University scholarship examinations will give it that recognition which is at present far from universal.

all-important aim—and the conclusion is obvious. No translation exercise must be allowed which would not conform to the definition "a translation of experience." It must consist in the translation of passages that are well within the pupil's range—*i. e.* that he understands in the foreign tongue—and is in fact an exercise in English style, though incidentally a test of the pupil's knowledge of French. This kind of translation exercise may be practised from the first, but it must not be frequent in the Elementary and Intermediate Stages for fear of setting up the translation habit. To give a very elementary illustration of the principle to be followed in such translation, a pupil ought not to have to translate "Quand il est l'heure de prendre le petit déjeuner, Paul descend l'escalier en courant," etc., if there is any risk of the literal English version intervening between the French and the corresponding mental representations, but only when the visualization of the French is so perfect that he says spontaneously in English, "When it's time to have breakfast, Paul runs downstairs."

It is obvious that in the Advanced Stage this kind of exercise becomes a most interesting and profitable form of *final treatment* for any passage that has been studied "intensively," *e. g.* by the process known as "Lecture Expliquée," or that has been particularly appreciated by the pupils, while its application to "unseen" passages is a convenient means of testing the range of our pupils' "passive" command of the language—a very necessary preparation for school-leaving and other examinations, where this kind of test must always play an important part.

As to translation from the mother tongue into the foreign, the same principle, of course, must apply as in translation from the foreign language. That means

that this kind of exercise must not be begun before the pupil has a very fair command of the foreign language, and would be able, so to speak, *to produce the foreign version as an original free composition*. It should be begun as late as possible, indeed I almost think it would be best to drop this test out of school examinations altogether.<sup>1</sup> The more I teach, the more I realize the profound truth of Viëtor's dictum: "*Die Uebersetzung ist eine Kunst die in die Schule nicht gehört.*" The habit of direct association—*i. e.* "thinking in French"—must be firmly established, or the presence of the English words will begin to interfere. It is extraordinary how pernicious an influence this presence exerts, especially if the words are visible. The pupils will make mistakes that they never make when expressing themselves directly in the foreign language. That is why it is important to do the translation, at any rate at first, orally, without any English text in sight. The English should be hurled at the pupils rapidly, in complete sentences, so as to call up immediately the mental representation which is in its turn to evoke some foreign equivalent, the important thing being that this equivalent should be idiomatic, not exact; there should be, as it were, a headlong jump into the foreign language, whence a return is then made approximating gradually to the closest equivalent that the language affords.

<sup>1</sup> It should, at any rate, have no place in examinations of the Senior Local and Matriculation type, and many teachers complain that the necessity of preparing their pupils for this test during the last year or two of the all too short four or five years course at their disposal is a serious obstacle to the development of Direct Association and the practice of Free Composition. In this connection the Cambridge Examinations Syndicate is to be congratulated on taking the lead (in their syllabus for 1918) in instituting a foreign language test in their Senior Local in which Free Composition only is demanded.

But it should be added that there is much divergence of opinion and practice among teachers as to the amount of both kinds of Translation that is advisable in all three stages of the language course. It is one of those points on which there is much loose thinking and a matter in which extraneous factors, such as the exigencies of examinations and unfavourable conditions, are the cause of or the excuse for grave inconsistencies in method.

As regards the teaching of Grammar, it is important to guard against a certain misconception and to meet a certain criticism.

Many people are under the impression that we don't teach grammar, and it is only too true that the work of our pupils, especially those who leave school at sixteen, is marred by much grammatical inaccuracy.

As regards the first point, it is obvious that by the inductive method described in the earlier portion of this chapter we are teaching grammar the whole time, but it is only gradually that each classification or category is completed, and even so, only those that are essential to the solidity of the edifice, at the height which it has reached. In short, we work inductively *up to* and not deductively *from* the abstract generalizations of the grammar-book. We end where the analytic method began, and, as our method is essentially heuristic, it is a training in observation and in scientific method. The interest aroused by the occasional pure-grammar lessons, in which a whole or a portion of a grammatical category is tabulated, is sufficient proof of the educational value of this system.

But, and here we come to the second point mentioned above, it is in the deductive part of the business that our pupils are apt to fail us, if we are not on the

watch to insist on their developing the habit of *using* the laws they have discovered and of referring to the linguistic types or examples from which they have been induced, both when they meet new examples and when they have to "test" the language forms spontaneously suggested by "direct" mental associations. We have not yet sufficiently recognized that the Direct Method implies the training of a different kind of "grammatical conscience" from that which was the triumph of the old regime—the grammatical conscience which could turn out a passage of French grammatically perfect but "stylistically" worthless. We have to devise special exercises<sup>1</sup> and special expedients<sup>2</sup> to enlist our pupils' own interest and co-operation in the training of the "testing" habit.

This testing function of the "grammatical conscience" is the necessary corollary of our whole system of the automatic association of language forms with definite sense impressions and mental representations. It is one more illustration of the way in which our method conforms to the pedagogic principle that not Reason and Rule must be the motive-power, but Instinct, controlled by the habit of Reason.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. the so-called "research" exercises, consisting in the hunting up of various grammatical phenomena in a given passage and the collection of the uses of prepositions and of verbal constructions on the basis of the *foreign* similarities of meaning or form, independently of their English equivalents: e.g. demander, commander, défendre, permettre, fournir—*quelquechose à quelqu'un*.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. making each pupil keep a chart on which he enters, under suitable rubrics, the number of times he has broken important grammatical rules in particular pieces of work. Mr. E. A. Peers, M.A., of Felsted, has made most interesting and successful experiments on these lines, furnishing a remarkable example of the way in which children may be stimulated to mental self-discipline (vid. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, March and June 1918, or *Modern Language Teaching*, March 1918).

But there is another factor in this problem of grammatical inaccuracy, and it is one which vitiates all comparison with the state of things in this respect under the old regime. The new methods have made it possible to teach the foreign language to a type of pupil that would be quite incapable of acquiring it on analytic lines, via grammar and translation, a type which is most prevalent among the pupils whose school career ends at sixteen, viz. the very ones whose work is most marred by grammatical inaccuracy. No one, I imagine, will question the value to the individual and to the nation of this extension of the field of foreign language teaching.

To sum up, the New Teaching of foreign languages is essentially an oral and non-translational method, and its various manifestations, determined as they are by local and individual restrictions and reservations, are all forms, more or less pure and complete, of the Direct Method, the only method that fits in to a consistent scheme of education deduced from the principles of modern physiology and psychology. If the reforms of method in other branches of study are right, then the Direct Method is also right. They stand or fall together. And as to which of the two will be their fate, one has only to ask a Reform teacher to know. The enthusiasm of his belief is not mere sectarian ardour. If one hears him speak about his work, the immensely varied and intensely real field of experience that it opens to that highest desideratum, *the co-operation of teacher and taught*, one is involuntarily reminded of Emerson's carpenter, who places the trunk he wants to rough hew, not above his head but beneath his feet, so that at every stroke of his axe Nature comes to his help ; by his "method" he enlists the force of

gravity and the whole universe approves and multiplies the least movement of his muscles. We are enthusiastically confident, because, when we are at work, we feel in ourselves and in our pupils the whole of Nature working with us.

This is a very different enthusiasm and a very different confidence from that of the grammarians of the Renaissance. These appealed, after all, to but a few—an intellectual aristocracy with an appetite for abstractions. It is to these grammarians that we owe the long tyranny of Grammar in language teaching.

The New Pedagogy is elaborating methods of instruction suited to a democratic age, for they bring within the reach of the many a command of foreign languages which is a tangible reality ; and it is highly significant that this should have the effect of relegating grammar to a subsidiary place, and of bringing into prominence those realistic, intuitive and creative factors which are essential conditions of all artistic expression, thus helping to restore to Art the place in Education which Plato assigned to her, and from which she has been ousted by the unholy alliance of the Puritan and the Pedant.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CLASSICS

By W. H. D. ROUSE, M.A., LITT.D., F.R.G.S., ETC.

MANY will be repelled at the outset by the suggestion of a New Teaching of classics ; but what I have to recommend is only partly new. In method and aim it is a return to the most ancient tradition, in spirit also it follows the few men of genius who have given themselves to education ; but it is indeed new as compared with the practice of the last forty years, especially since we have been under the German influence. Routine and pedantry have settled on our schools like a blight, and it cannot be denied that the leaders of education have refused to face the truth. The result is that we are now in danger of seeing the whole study of classics destroyed. The only hope is in immediate and drastic measures of remedy ; even so the struggle will be far harder because of past negligence.

If classical study is to continue, it must be infused with the new spirit of reality which has already transformed parts of our school work. This is seen especially in the work of young children. We are no longer content to supply them with books and to hear lessons : their life is full and happy, their work is like a delightful scheme of play, not as their own games aimless and intermittent, but full of an intellectual purpose

which gradually becomes clear to them. Classics, too, must be brought into touch with their life and their natural impulses, and it must be kept there : thus only can the necessary hard work be done with a gusto, thus only can we keep them always young, but the thing is possible if we guide and stimulate instead of repressing and imposing. The boy is the centre of education ; what is within him it is our part to draw out, to cultivate, to bring under control of his will, and to do this we must always imagine ourselves in his place. Imagine, then, a young boy, full of life, full of curiosity, eager to be doing something : when you give him a book full of Latin declensions, and force him to learn them, without using them in any way except to translate idiotic sentences signifying nothing, how does that appear to him ? Will he not ask, What has this to do with me ? Such a task is repugnant to a boy in proportion as he is intelligent ; he hates it, and he is quite right to hate it ; it can only be imposed on him by force, or by telling him that if he works he will get a scholarship or something of that sort. Thus his first impression of work realized by him to be intellectual is in itself repugnant, and it is associated with a sordid aim. But show him that Latin is a language in which he can express his own feelings and describe his own actions or the world he lives in ; tell him that by learning it he will win the key to many stories like those of Horatius, and to other things of more value still, he is as eager to learn as you are to teach.

This implies a New Method of teaching, or rather, as I have said already, an Old Method revived, which shall be based in the nature of the boy, and shall arise out of his inborn tastes and desires. This, the Direct Method as it is called, has already been proved to be

of incomparable efficiency, and this it is that I recommend as the remedy for our present difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

Along with this new spirit and this new method, and naturally arising out of them, we must have a new aim to crown our classical work. This, like the others, is really old. Classics used to be studied, or at least Latin was studied, simply for its use in practical life: the Latin language was the key to knowledge. We must regard the classical languages as the key to wisdom and beauty. They have many secondary benefits.<sup>2</sup> Both are necessary, and especially Latin, to all who would use historical sources; Greek is necessary for the clergyman, useful for the physician, not without value for the man of science, who without it cannot understand his own horrible vocabulary; Latin is of the greatest possible service to all who wish to learn French, Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese. The use of these languages is also profitable to the learner, as aids to self-expression, and as a training in logic and in simplicity. But the content of the literatures is incomparable. For law and politics we have Rome to our teacher, for the whole range of intellectual life we have Greece; the two literatures together contain a compendium of human thought and experience, profoundly useful for the statesman, the professional man, and the citizen, and within so small a compass that no man need despair of mastering it. But we have lost sight of this in notes and dissertations

<sup>1</sup> See: *Modern Languages* (Board of Education, Circular 797); *The Teaching of Greek in the Perse School* (Board of Education, Educational Pamphlets, No. 28); *The Teaching of Latin in the Perse School* (second edition in the Press).

<sup>2</sup> *Latin and Greek in American Education*, papers by public men and business men, edited by F. W. Kelsey (New York, Macmillan Company).

and all the pedant's bag of tricks. We must read in the mass again, as our forefathers used to do, and use our notes as a help instead of a hindrance ; and we must set before us the aim of assimilating the wisdom here stored up. As for beauty, men of our race need more than some others to study models of perfect form and grace, such as Greece in particular gives ; if there be any good for the soul in fine literature, here it is to be found in perfection, and nowhere else : and with it, the opportunity to ponder all those moral problems that meet us in life, as they showed themselves to a prophet like *Æschylus* or a philosopher like *Plato*. Let no one imagine that these benefits can be got through translations. Poetry loses all its essence in a translation ; for the effect is produced by sense, sound, rhythm, and order working together, and when the last three are changed, the sense changes also. We can make this a part of us only by taking it in as the author meant us to do. The same is true of prose in a less degree, but in proportion to the beauty and skill of the original. Only from the original can we get the full persuasive force of *Plato's* inspiration, the full zest of *Herodotus's* good stories. The dry bones we can get in translations, but nothing more ; unless, indeed, the translator serves them up in flesh and blood of his own, like *Thomas North* or *Philemon Holland*. But the unhappy truth is, that if we do not read the originals, we shall not as a nation read the translations either. That this is true may be tested by a reference to the time-tables of the new schools that have been founded since 1902 ; it may also be tested by the recommendations of men of science for educational reform, when, as a few have done, they condescend

to details. Without the study of Latin and Greek, the heritage of the classics will soon be no more than the fables of early Rome and a few legends of Greece.

One result of the Direct Method will be a great saving of time, which will make it possible to compile a new time-table. In fact, this reform is bound up with certain other principles, without which it cannot be successful. One is what we may call the Succession of Languages. The learning of a new language needs concentrated effort without distraction ; it is fatal to begin two at once,<sup>1</sup> for they confuse each other, and it is impossible to produce a lasting impression. A second must be postponed until the elements of the first are quite familiar. Moreover, there is a limit to the time that can be profitably given to a new language, for it is a mistake to suppose that double time gives double benefit. These matters are generally agreed, not only in principle but in detail, as we shall shortly see : but the question, what age is the best to begin with, is not agreed. Some think ten, and some twelve, the best age, and few if any would wish to begin earlier. We have made some experiments, not enough to deduce a general principle, but enough to confirm the impression of most others, that the best age is ten. We have found that boys beginning at eight, nine and ten were about on a level at twelve. To begin at nine may make the progress a little easier, but even this is not certain. Nursery French is of no use ; children are apt to learn as much bad as good in that way, since their nurses are not trained teachers, and their main object is not to teach the art of speaking.

<sup>1</sup> Yet I have known three foreign languages begun at once, French, Latin, and Greek, by boys ten years old.

At ten the organs of speech are still flexible, and the boy can learn to make any sounds ; if this faculty be now trained, he never loses it, but if it be neglected, he loses it very soon. I believe this diminishes rapidly after the age of ten, and by twelve a good deal is gone ; in our experience the difficulty of teaching is greatly increased with those who begin at that age, and I believe that those who support beginning at twelve are unconsciously influenced against beginning earlier by local difficulties ; they are making the best of a bad job. To begin at ten also makes it possible, without pressure, to get four languages into the school course ; only three are desirable if we begin at twelve.

It is generally agreed that the first foreign language taught should be French ; its advantages over Latin at that stage are obvious, its advantages over German at any stage no less obvious.

Experience has shown that not less than one daily lesson is necessary in a new language, which should be not less than half an hour long, and for young children not more than three-quarters : it is doubtful whether a second lesson later in the day is an advantage, but it is certainly not necessary. On the whole, it seems that there is an advantage in giving two or three extra lessons in the week for the first term or year, after which they are not needed. Experience has also shown that two years' interval is necessary before another language is tried, if the best work is to be done. Of course this applies as a general rule : the clever boy will do the work sooner, and there are some who would hardly learn a foreign language in a millennium. The second language (at twelve) must be Latin, if the boy is to make anything of it, and the third Greek (at fourteen) : this leaves us the years sixteen to nineteen

for a fourth, and it is quite easy to learn enough in that time, with maturer powers, to speak, read, and write it. I repeat, these four languages can be learnt without any undue strain, and the cost for each is, speaking generally, one lesson a day.

The time saved may be judged from the following calculation. Time-tables of Preparatory Schools are shown in the Board of Education Special Reports (vi. 46-48), and there is no reason to suppose that any great change has taken place since these were published. From these it appears that boys of ten are doing French, Latin, and Greek, which are begun earlier, for sixteen school hours a week,<sup>1</sup> in preparation for scholarships at a Public School ; the time given to classics in the Public School gradually increases, until on the classical side little else is done at the top. I reckon the number of school hours spent on Latin before the boy reaches the sixth form at 2,160 ; on the Direct Method the time spent is 613 on the average, and 248 is spent on Greek. It is not so easy to calculate the time usually spent on Greek, but it cannot be much less than the Latin. Thus at a moderate estimate three-fourths of the time spent on classics is saved, and it is probably much more ; this time now becomes available for English, French, Mathematics, Science, and other subjects, and it is possible for the first time to give a good all-round education. In the period of special study (sixteen to nineteen), the classical boy gives about half his school time to his special study, the rest being spent on English, French, German, Mathematics, or other subjects. At the end he competes without disadvantage in the open scholar-

<sup>1</sup> This does not include preparation, which takes about twelve more. I use the unit of sixty minutes in this calculation.

ship examinations, which only test a part of his classical ability: for if the candidates were asked to make a Latin or Greek speech on a given theme, and to write a Latin or Greek essay at speed, and to carry on a lively conversation in Latin or Greek, those who have been taught on the Direct Method would be quite at their ease, but most of the others would not.

It is essential, however, that English language and literature should be taught, since the whole time allotted to foreign languages is filled with those languages. It is taught largely by reading aloud. The teacher of English must be able to read aloud well, to speak well, to use his voice properly. How far most schoolmasters fall short of this, is notorious; but it is an indispensable necessity, and the teacher's training ought to make the use of the voice the foundation of everything. Those of us who have not natural gifts in this direction, ought without a moment's delay to try to improve themselves. They will be richly rewarded in the pleasure of their daily work, and in the interest of their pupils. This applies to all teachers, but especially to those who teach literature; Latin and Greek are usually murdered, because teachers have untrained voices, and so bad an ear that they cannot distinguish between long and short, although they will indignantly deny it. The English teaching will also include oral and written composition. The details of this study do not concern us here,<sup>1</sup> but it must be mentioned as a corollary to the Direct Method.

The principles indicated above involve a new time-table, and it may be useful to suggest one which will give time enough for Classics on the Direct Method.

The unit is the period of forty-five minutes.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Play Way*, by H. Caldwell Cook (Hinemann).

*Preparatory School (ages under ten).*

French: one lesson of thirty to forty-five minutes daily for boys of nine to ten is the utmost that can be advised. If the top form of the Preparatory is parallel to the bottom form of the Upper School, and the age be ten to eleven, it may conform to that form.

*Upper School.*

	English History and Geography.	French.	Latin.	Greek or German.	Mathematics.	Science, including Nature Study.	Drawing.	Singing.	Drill.
Form I.	13	9	1	1	6	4	2	2	3
II.	13	9	6	6	6	4	2	2	3
III. B	10	6	6	—	6	4	1	2	3
III. A	11	6	6	1	6	5	1	1	3
IV.	7	6	8	5	5	4	—	1	3
V.	7	6	8	5	5	4	—	1	3
VI.	About two-thirds of the time given to special subject; the rest given to other counterbalancing subjects.								

It is not my purpose to present a manual of the Direct Method. Some idea of it may be gathered from certain of the text-books which have been written to explain or to accompany it.<sup>1</sup> We are concerned here with

<sup>1</sup> *Praeceptor* (S. O. Andrews), *Primus Annus* and *Secundus Annus* (W. E. Paine and C. L. Mainwaring): all published by the Clarendon Press; *Via Nova* (W. H. S. Jones), Cambridge University Press; *Some Notes on the Direct Method* (R. B. Appleton), Heffer, Cambridge; *Initium* (W. H. S. Jones and R. B. Appleton), *Teacher's Companion to Initium* (R. B. Appleton), Cambridge University Press; *Pons Tironum* (R. B. Appleton), Heffer; *Perse Latin Plays* (R. B. Appleton), Heffer; *Decem Fabulae* (Paine, Mainwaring, and Ryle), Clarendon Press; *A First Greek Book* and its reader, *A Greek Boy at Home* (W. H. D. Rouse), Blackie; *Lucian's Dialogues, with Greek Notes* (W. H. D. Rouse), Clarendon Press. See also the *Classical Review*: 1907, *Latin Composition*, p. 129; *Mental Gymnastic*, p. 193; 1908, *Translation*, p. 105; 1910, *Shall we drop Latin Prose?* p. 103. The general method is described, with specimens of the result, in two pamphlets of the Board of

general principles and general results, and the details may be found in the books already mentioned. But it should not be forgotten that the method cannot be fully described in books. In particular, the extraordinary effect on the learner, in keeping his attention and his goodwill, and the quick progress, can only be estimated if one is present in the class-room.

Since our work is based on the spoken word, it is necessary to lay a firm foundation by taking the utmost care with the pronunciation, first in ourselves and then in our pupils. For ourselves it is necessary, because we have all without exception been brought up to a vicious carelessness of speech, which substitutes stress for quantity, and breaks the vowel sounds generally into diphthongs ; which wholly ignores the Greek accents, and gives an alien sound to the Greek language by adding a stress when English words would be likely to have it. When no one utters a Greek or Latin phrase except by the way, as a part of an English discourse, the effect of these faults is less noticed ; but when everything depends on the utterance, and when our authors are read aloud from beginning to end, it is not too much to say that faulty pronunciation spoils the whole. We have to train our own tongues and our own ears to distinguish between long and short by beating time, and attending for the nonce to nothing else ; we have to train our tongues and ears to a rising tone for the Greek acute accent, and a rise-and-fall for the circumflex, by chanting or singing, and attending to nothing else until it is done

unconsciously ; and we have continually to counteract as far as we can the impulse to lay stress. The wise man will get the help of some friend, or better still some intelligent voice-trainer, to whom he may explain what he wants and may thus make sure that he is not deceiving himself. I am not making much of a trifle : it is the truth, that very few scholars know the difference between a long vowel and a short. The effect of Greek and Latin read or spoken with due attention to quantity is entirely different from what we usually hear : and very sonorous and beautiful it is.

I do not intend to give reasons why we should adopt the pronunciation of vowels and consonants which the ancients themselves used ; this has been ascertained with practical certainty, and it seems to me obviously proper to follow it.<sup>1</sup> It presents no practical difficulty, except for those who make their own difficulties ; and if it needs constant and watchful care, so does any other attempt to teach any pronunciation properly. Those who refuse to take the necessary care (and in fact most people take little or no care) are really not fit to teach any language at all. Most of the hard work has already been done for us by the teachers of English and of French, who have given their course of phonetics : the boys have already learnt how to make all the sounds except the Greek aspirates, and we have only to identify them. We have a great advantage over all other language teachers, in that Greek and Latin spelling is phonetic : each sound has its fixed symbol, each symbol its fixed sound, and a word need

<sup>1</sup> It is to be found, without serious differences, in a pamphlet issued by the Cambridge University Press, in one of the Classical Association, in Postgate's *Latin Grammar*, Rouse's *First Greek Course*, and many other modern books.

never be spelt. Indeed, no word ever ought to be spelt. If a pupil cannot write on the board a new word without spelling, his teacher is at fault, and has not pronounced it properly.

In beginning Latin, it is important to have as wide a view as possible over the grammatical forms. To confine the early exercises<sup>1</sup> to one conjugation, or one voice, or one declension of nouns, creates an impression hard to erase, that all others are irregular. We must get into use with all possible speed, all the types of forms that are common in daily intercourse ; this includes at least the present imperative and present indicative of all conjugations, and some cases at least of all declensions. These are brought in by means of the Series, an indispensable aid to teaching of the highest value.<sup>2</sup> The pupils learn these series of sentences quite readily, without knowing anything about conjugations or declensions, which can be tabulated after they have become familiar by use. I will give an instance which may serve as a first lesson in Latin.<sup>3</sup> The teacher's commands are usually understood by his tone and gesture, especially as the pupils have learnt from French what he would be at ; but if not, he may interpolate the equivalent in English. The master, at the beginning, is helped by some one who may be another master, or a student teacher, or some elder boy to whom he has explained what he wants. The boys reply in chorus, speaking loud and distinctly.

*Master and Assistant (rising from their seats).* Sur-gimus ; (sitting down) cōsīdimus.

<sup>1</sup> It will be understood that I use this term in its proper sense, and I do not confine it to written exercises.

<sup>2</sup> See M. de Glehn above, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> For another first lesson, see Appleton's *Teacher's Companion to Initium*.

They repeat this once or twice, then beckoning to the class to imitate.

*M. Surgite (repeated or explained until they rise).*

*M. Cōnsidite (they sit).*

After a little practice—

*M. and A. Surgimus—stāmus—cōnsidimus—sedēmus. (Imitated by the class.)*

*M. and A. Surgimus—stāmus—exīmus (they go away from their seats)—ambulāmus (they walk about)—revenimus—cōnsidimus—sedēmus.*

Here are all the four conjugations ; and the master may now, if he thinks fit, explain their differences in English in so far as they have been exemplified ; or he may keep it until later. In any case, the words should be written by a boy or boys on the board, and then by all in the notebooks. The same drill may be done with *surgo*, etc., the Master and his assistant doing it first, and afterwards Master and certain boys.

The next stage is to add the second person.

*M. Surgite (they rise).*

*Boys. Surgimus. M. Surgitis. State. B. Stamus.*

*M. Stātis. Exite, and so forth. This may be repeated with and without the imperative, and in the singular.*

Lastly—

*M. Surgite. B. Surgimus. M. Surgitis. A. (to Master). Surgunt, etc. After this various boys must be put on to take the place of master and assistant. It will be seen that by dividing up the boys, all can be made to practise all the forms of the series. This should be practised each day at the beginning of the lesson, until they know it all. This simple series is capable of indefinite variety and expansion ; I will give a few types, leaving the reader to divine how to lead up to them.*

*M.* Ego surgō. *B.* (*pointing at Master*). Tu surgis ; (*pointing at each other*) Ille surgit.

*M.* O Balbe, surge. Quid facis ? *Balbus.* Surgō. O puerī, quid faciō ? *B.* Surgis. O Magister, quid facit Balbus ? *M.* Surgit Balbus.

Or with a case—

*M.* O Balbe, aperi fenestram. Quid facis ? *B.* Aperiō fenestram. O puerī, quid faciō ? etc.

Other tenses can be worked in.

*M.* Sedeō. Mox surgam. Surgo. Balbe, quid facis ? *B.* Sedeō. *M.* Quid mox facies ? *B.* (*perhaps after a hint*). Surgam. *M.* Surge. *B.* Surgō, etc.

*M.* Surgō : antea sedebam. Balbe, tu surge. *B.* Surgō. *M.* Quid antea faciebās ? *B.* Sedebam, etc.

*M.* Aperiō fenestram. Aperiū fenestram. Tu Balbe, aperi. *B.* Aperiō fenestram. *M.* Quid fēcisti ? *B.* Aperiū fenestram, etc.

With opening door or desk or book, coming up to the board, taking the chalk and writing, and all the ordinary doings of the day, there is plenty of scope for varying the formula and at the same time increasing the vocabulary. Certainly, every boy is kept alive and happy, and (no small advantage) they are not stooping cramped over the desks. If any one thinks this is an unworthy use of the Latin language, I do not agree with him. It is the natural use of the Latin language, and, because it is natural, it is enjoyed and not resented, as the natural boy very properly resents writing nonsense about goddesses and justice or Labienus and his legions.

Very early, perhaps in the first lesson, all the boys should have Latin names. These may be *Primus*, *Secundus*, *Tertius*, or their own names Latinized (*Ricardus*, *Terentius*, *Thōmās*) or translated (*Sartor*,

Vēnātor, Lūpus); an easy way of introducing the vocative and of adding new words to the vocabulary. With a mixed class the distinction between *primus* and *prima* brings in the first two declensions. It is easy to see how simple acts may introduce all the cases in turn, and explain them without words: and before long we may begin to read.<sup>1</sup>

From these examples, the place of grammar in the system ought to be clear. The boys who have learnt these series know their grammar; it is an easy step to write out the paradigm and to study it scientifically. Grammar must be learnt, but it is learnt after use, and when its value is understood. And so it is all through. Mistakes are made, of course, but they are made in speech and speedily corrected; written mistakes should be very few, and it is the written mistake that remains. Those who advocate exercise-books and rote-learning are apt to assume that grammar is learnt in that way. The fact is far otherwise: Direct Method teachers would be ashamed to do no better than these do. But what we aim at chiefly is accuracy in idiom and in the instinct for the right thing. This is never gained by the majority except through speech and the habit of hearing and speaking. The progress is from accuracy in idiom at first to accuracy in detail at last, the natural order of events. Those who aim at accuracy in detail from the first do not often get even that, and they never get the other.

Another point in which we reverse the usual order is, that all new work is first done in school, the home-work being revision or some kind of test. The task of the

<sup>1</sup> A brilliant example of the Direct Method lesson is Dr. Arnold's *Pyramus and Thisbe* (in *Deem Febur*): which, as a play, is charming, as a lesson, perfect.

class is simply and solely to understand. This is a task quite hard enough for the learner ; the boys help out each other, and the master is there for the rest, but their explanations are all in Latin or Greek, all practice, all to the good, and English is only used if the Latin fails. The home-work may be some grammar or text to learn by heart, or an English version of the part read. In the last case, the learner's sole task is to express the meaning, which he knows already. One thing at a time is all we do. The odd thing is that such translations are far better done than if the piece had been translated in class : they are original and fresh, and often very good. These versions are but a test for the master whether he has done his work properly, for a boy can always express what he has understood. The fear of cribs and illicit help entirely disappears ; any such can be instantly detected, and it is of no use to the boy, for no crib can help him in class ; nothing but skill and knowledge can help him there, and that is where the real work is done. The Direct Method destroys one of the schoolmaster's ancient bugbears.

As knowledge increases, special lessons are given on translation as an art, how to bring out all the points of a piece and to omit nothing. But these need not be many. Latin is learnt by itself, and English by itself, and the task is now to bring these two together. The piece chosen must always be well within the boy's powers ; he must not be worried with new difficulties. Before taking an open scholarship examination, a few pieces of unseen translation done in a given time suffice to prepare the candidate.

If the reader has understood what the preceding pages mean, he will see that the question of Composition

*solvitur ambulando.* There have been many discussions in the classical world as to whether we can save time by dropping this and that: verses, of course; Greek prose and even Latin prose, say some anxious souls, desiring to save something from the wreck. The Direct Method has a better plan: to save time by teaching Latin and Greek in the classical hours, and English in the English hours, while Latin and Greek prose at least are being used all the time. A very simple solution, as surprising to others, it would seem, as was the discovery of M. Jourdain to himself. The boys have only to write down the things they have been saying, or what they have heard their master say: for, of course, he must always be a stage above his class, more full, more literary, wider in vocabulary; he must continually introduce novelties, and follow up any that promise well. Here an allusion, there a proverb, may excite some one's attention and give the excuse for something more. Occasional exercises, rare at first, will lead the boy to write better and better. When he is familiar with the elements of Latin or Greek, a story may be told to him, and he be asked to reproduce it in his own way for the next lesson. This is to be done regularly, say three times a week, in the fourth year of Latin rarely in the second year of Greek (the two stages that end the general education, after which comes the sixth form or period of special work); and rarely pieces of easy English may be set to translate into Latin. Or a few boys may undertake to prepare short Latin or Greek speeches to make before their fellows. They may be encouraged to choose subjects for themselves. Plays are another useful practice; they may be learnt, or home-made, and the reading will often provide subjects. At the end of this stage, boys are able to

write a good Latin letter, or a short story, correctly and without trouble.<sup>1</sup>

When the next stage begins, the special students of classics have a wide gap to bridge between the simple style and vocabulary of their hitherto exercises, and the literary style of Cicero and Livy, of Demosthenes, Thucydides and Plato. I have found the best bridge over this gap is the Summary. We read each day several pages of Latin or Greek; and for one year the evening work of the beginners is to read as much as they can again, and to produce a short summary of it, using the author's words and constructions. In doing this they are gradually to wean themselves from the book, until at last they can do the summary in large chunks without referring to the book at all. Always quality, not quantity, is asked for. Two series of these exercises are analysed in the pamphlet referred to above, where also specimens are given.<sup>2</sup> In this way the vocabulary is enlarged, and the literary style is gained. In the second year, one summary is asked for each week of the week's Latin work, and one of the Greek, and one piece of English is set to translate into Latin or Greek. In the third year, the summary is dropped, and three pieces for translation are set each week, prose and verse alternately. This has been found to be quite enough to enable candidates to compete for open scholarships without disadvantage, and there are not so many as to bore the learners with monotony. We find that a boy is sufficiently prepared for the open scholarship after doing twenty to thirty pieces of set English into Latin prose and as many into Greek, and the same

<sup>1</sup> Some sets of these are analysed in *The Teaching of Latin at the Perse School*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Teaching of Greek in the Perse School*.

with verse.<sup>1</sup> Think what a saving of time this implies ! Most of the time usually spent on what is called "composition" is thus seen to be sheer waste.

The procedure with verse is different. None is attempted before the sixth form; and none then without plenty of reading first. The boys are already familiar with the rhythm more or less, having read some Catullus, Martial, Horace, Ovid, Virgil, and Homer; they know the general principles of scansion. After a few hundred lines of a verse author have been read, the boys are invited to write a few lines in imitation on some similar theme. This first exercise will show where their knowledge is defective, and what they need to be told. Then a few hundred more lines read, and a piece of English verse is given for translation, without preliminary exercises except in Greek iambics.<sup>2</sup> The measure of success will astonish any one who has no experience of what reading aloud can do.<sup>3</sup> The ear is so trained by this practice that to imitate the rhythm is easy. A few exercises will show whether any are hopeless ; the rest go on.

A useful and attractive way of encouraging self-expression is to ask for a short speech or lecture. Any topic may be taken that suggests itself ; some question arising out of the text, which the volunteer will get up, or anything he may be interested in. I take the following from the work of one term, none imposed from without—

<sup>1</sup> This does not include those done in the fourth year ; but they are few, and they are very simple, not pieces chosen from English authors.

<sup>2</sup> Here a few lines from a dozen exercises of Damon (Blackie) are very useful for avoiding mistakes.

<sup>3</sup> See specimens of first attempts in *The Teaching of Greek in the Perse School*.

*Κάλχας καὶ Μόρφος—ἀγών· Ἀγαμέμνων· Δημοσθένης στρατηγός· Οἰκυπέλαι· Αχιλλεύς· Παραθίραια· τὰ δυλα τὰ· Ομηρικά· τὰ δεῖπτα τὰ Ἑλληνικά· ἐκφορὰ τῶν γεκρῶν· Απόλλων· Φίλιππος Μακεδών· περὶ ὀρῶν ἐνιαυτοῦ· μέτοικος· Εἴλωτες· Ομηρος· ἀγαλματοποιοί καὶ ἀγαλματοποιῶν· Αργώνανται· φάλαγξ· Βαρραχομομαχία· ἀρχοντες· Αθηναῖοι· Περσεύς.* Gladiatores: Cicero: Comitium: de signis Romanis: oratores Graeci: M. Antonius: tribuni plebis: Sallustius: Senatus: Janus: oratio contra orationes:<sup>1</sup> oratio pro orationibus habendis: narratiuncula: de sacrificiis Romanis: de septem regibus: de iudicis publicis: Carthago: mythologia: de libris antiquis: de oratore: Polybius: pontes Romani: munimenta.

The speeches last about ten minutes, and questions are allowed. They are often extraordinarily good, sometimes witty. One in particular I remember, of a boy who had forgotten to prepare; he gave a charming impromptu, in which he drew a parallel between his proud pedagogue and Orbilius, which was elegantly expressed and full of sly humour. Many pieces of work also give scope for acting; lawsuits may be tried again, with witnesses to be cross-examined; or Catiline driven out of the senate.

It is now clear, I think, that to base our work on the spoken word saves time and gives reality and life to the whole; I hope it is equally clear that we are free from the reproach, so often made, with so many others, by those who will not take the trouble to inquire, that we teach Latin and Greek in order to be able to talk. The opposite is true: we talk in order to teach. The talk is not baby talk or nursery prattle: it is careful and correct, and leads up to the literary style, which, like all good styles, is speech in its essence. It should be also clear from the results

<sup>1</sup> As may be imagined, this was a piece of fun.

that to read and discuss without translation is enough to enable the pupils to translate if they are put to it. But it must be distinctly stated that only by reading aloud, and in no other way whatever, can the student receive the author's meaning as he wished it to be received, in his order, with his emphasis, in the mood he wished to call up. Many a point I had missed in reading alone has come out clearly when I heard it read aloud ; and a class thus prepared takes all the points readily. I wish there were space to give examples ; I am confident that many would be new to those who read this. And it is extraordinary how words, phrases, even whole lines and sentences remain in the memory after just one reading. There was one word *στρέμμα*, "a strain," that occurred in a speech of Demosthenes ; two years later this was remembered when some boy suffered this mishap. The word *mergus* called up *statio gratissima mergis* read a year before. I called on a boy to recite : he said "Bis hodie me iussisti recitare," and a friend at once rejoined, "Crambe repetita." Another, wishing to go to the dentist, said, "Licet ad dentifrangibulum progrediar?" a word which had amused him many months before. One drew on the board a human figure with six fingers ; a boy called out "Sex habet digitos !" The draughtsman, smiling, "Sextus Digitius ille quidem" —of whom we had read in Livy two years before. Others will quote whole lines that have taken their fancy—*O colonia quae cupis ponte ludere longo—κεῖτο μέγας μεγαλωτή, λελαυέρος ιπποσυράω—πάρο ποταμὸν κελάδοτα, παρὰ ρύδανὸν δορακῆα*. After reading Horace iv. 13, I said : "Non placet mihi hoc carmen quamvis sit odiosa haec femina" ; the reply came, "Melius

erit cras nobis carmen recitandum," to which another rejoined, "Quis scit an adiant hodiernae crastina summae tempora di superi?" If they can play like this with their knowledge, if they can jest and pun, is Latin or Greek a dead language? One, Bird, came in with a message: at once some one cried, "Bonum omen! avis a dextra!" Another boy who usually sat by the fire took his seat one day by the window; I asked, "Tune demigrasti?" He replied, "Illa sunt hiberna." One talking of metre, happened to say, "Ἐστι πούς—" and another, not letting him finish, asked, "ποῦ ὅτι;" I remarked of a certain *viva voce* summary, "βραχὺ μέν—" at once some one said, "δῆλον τι φέλον τε," and another, "βραχὺς γὰρ καὶ διπλῖς." Or again, on Ovid, *Ex Ponto* i. 2. 20, the reader explained, "Niobe saxea est facta," another added, "Sicut Lotti uxor," and a third, "Salse dictum!" Trifles, no doubt, but are they so bad? would they not add a spice to table-talk? And they are signs of a mood which I venture to think is not unimportant for education. One more I will add, to show how naturally mistakes are corrected. A boy read (Hor. iv. 14. 5), "o qua sol habitabilis illustrat oras"; amidst general laughter some one cried, "Non est sol habitabilis." I said: "Si sol habitabilis est, i tu et habita," and a boy said, "Non in sole habitat ille sed in luna; est lunaticus." Is not this better than "Parse *habitabilis*," or "What does it agree with?"

One object of this class-room talk is to transfer as many words as possible from the passive to the active vocabulary, from being merely understood when heard to being ready for instant use. In one term I noted more than 2,000 different words thus spontaneously

used, which is quite a good working vocabulary, if there were no more.<sup>1</sup> For idiom, syntax, and grammar, the trifles I have quoted are, perhaps, enough to satisfy curiosity ; they have not been doctored in any way.

In our task, we are at one disadvantage as compared with our modern language colleagues. They can always fall back on the language as now used by a nation ; they can refresh their memories, and enlarge their knowledge, in the most natural way by intercourse with living people. For us there is nothing but the written record. We must make many mistakes, chiefly perhaps of omission ; and we can never learn the intonations of the sentence, though we can learn and reproduce the sounds of the constituent parts. That must be accepted, and the more readily, since with us this speaking is a means to an end, where many things once important now do not matter. But there is a great mass of material in the record which is simple, direct, and colloquial, quite enough to make us confident that we are (within our limits) speaking as the ancients spoke. Ransack your Plautus, Aristophanes, Plato, Lucian ; search Cicero's Letters and the bits of lively dialogue or narrative which he so often gives ; digest the admirable dialogues of Erasmus, Vives, and Corderius :<sup>2</sup> these furnish all we can want. Spice your talk with proverbs,<sup>3</sup> which may be varied from week

<sup>1</sup> I have printed this list, and I shall be happy to send copies to those interested as long as they last. If none is received this will be an indication that the stock is exhausted.

<sup>2</sup> Whole series of Latin lessons in Latin are given in Eisässer, *Lingua: Discit Latinam*, and *Nas in Schola Latine loquimur* (de Meester, Brussels).

<sup>3</sup> *Corpus Paroemiographicorum Graecorum* ; Margabitz, *Florilegium Proverbiorum Universae Latinitatis*.

to week until schoolboys know more than most University dons. And those delightful oaths! If you are aroused to wrath, let off *i in maximam malam crucem*, or *ες νόρανας*, and it all evaporates, without the chance of an indignant parent's protesting. You will be amused to notice with what glee any such phrase is hailed if it is afterwards met with in reading; I have known even *O di immortales* welcomed as an old friend. Real experiences are thus recalled by the printed words, which is exactly what we want. Besides this, the master must, of course, continually re-read the great masterpieces. If any one thinks he can teach and yet confine himself to his trivial round, he is mistaken.

I have but space for a brief summary of results. Those who specialize in other subjects end their classical course usually at fifteen or sixteen, although I have known excellent results follow when such a boy has taken the Latin reading with the sixth for pleasure, doing no writing and no preparation. At this stage they will have read easy pieces of Catullus, Martial, Horace, Virgil, and Homer, and portions of Cicero, Livy, Caesar, Tacitus, Lucian, Herodotus, and perhaps Plato or Thucydides.<sup>1</sup> They go into life knowing something of the great peoples on whom all our civilization depends, and I am bold to say that their memories of their work are pleasant. You will hear no bitter cries of wasted time from them, no letters by these will appear in *The Times* calling down fire and brimstone on the Greek language: they respect their work, and are glad to have done it. The specialists, owing to the rapid reading which the method makes

<sup>1</sup> These are included in the four-years course of Latin, two-years course of Greek.

possible, read the whole of Virgil, Horace, Homer, and Sophocles ; these are always done, and we always read three or four plays of Plautus, parts of Catullus, Lucretius, Juvenal, Martial, Ovid, Caesar (usually the whole Gallic War), Cicero (a dozen speeches, some letters and some philosophy), Livy, Tacitus ; the trilogy of *Æschylus*, a couple of plays of Aristophanes, parts or the whole of Thucydides and Herodotus, four or five dialogues of Plato, and ten speeches of Demosthenes. Other writers are taken according to circumstance : amongst them are Theocritus, Hesiod, Longinus, Xenophon, Lucan, Propertius, Tibullus, Sallust, Pliny, Suetonius, Seneca. A library of texts in sets is kept in the room, so that references can be looked up or illustrative pieces read on the spot. The grammar and critical work is treated as it comes up, and collected later in special lessons. Most important of all, the wisdom of the ancients is sought for its own sake ; and in these authors nearly all the burning questions of morals, religion, and politics come up for discussion somewhere. Finally, I repeat that the learning of four languages imposes no undue strain on a boy of linguistic tastes. In fact, quite a number of boys have learnt a fifth to amuse themselves : amongst these have been Sanskrit, Arabic, and Italian.

For the pupil the Direct Method, which may appear superficially to make his work easy, really makes him willing to do it. There is more real hard work than there is under the indirect system ; but it is done with the same zest as his games are played, and leaves him with a consciousness of power. The inimitable freshness of childhood is kept ; he is guided and even restrained, but not driven. And for the pedagogue the work is a delight. Only one word of warning—

let him not put on airs of omniscience and solemnity. He must be a part of the gay company ; he must not mind giving himself away, he must be a human being, not a wooden stick ; gladly must he learn, and then he will gladly teach.

## CHAPTER V

### SCIENCE

BY PROFESSOR T. PERCY NUNN, M.A., D.Sc.

THERE is a well-known passage in Herbert Spencer's *Education* where that stiff old Victorian, for once "dropping into poetry," speaks of Science as the household drudge in the family of knowledges, who, while ceaselessly ministering to the rest, has been kept, like Cinderella, "in the background that her haughty sisters might flaunt their fripperies in the eyes of the world." But, he continues, "the parallel holds yet further. For we are fast coming to the *dénouement* when the positions will be changed; and while these haughty sisters sink into merited neglect, Science, proclaimed as highest alike in worth and beauty, will reign supreme."

This confident and uncompromising prophecy was uttered in 1861. Since that date there has been at least one period when it seemed well on the way to fulfilment. During the closing years of the last century the encouragement of sporadic instruction in science which was one of the functions of the Science and Art Department of South Kensington, developed by rapid steps into an elaborate scheme for fostering the systematic teaching of the subject in schools. Seduced by the substantial grants which were the reward of conversion, many an ancient foundation turned from the

cult of the Latin grammar to the cult of the test-tube, and renewed its youth as a "school of science." Nor was the movement confined to schools commonly recognized as secondary. The powerful and ambitious School Boards of the larger towns, overlooking or ignoring the statutory limitations on their activities, joined in the fashion, and organized their "higher elementary" and "higher grade" schools as "schools of science." These, unhampered by older traditions and well equipped from the ratepayer's purse, not only secured a full share of the Department's grants, but also entered into a vigorous and successful competition for pupils with their secondary rivals. Meanwhile, the "whiskey money," which, with typical British *inconsequence*, had been diverted from the compensation of displaced publicans to the coffers of the Technical Education Committees of the County Councils established by the Act of 1899, began also to be largely devoted, with other local funds, to the encouragement of science teaching in secondary schools. Thus the last decade of the nineteenth century and the earliest years of the twentieth saw a very remarkable impetus given to the study of science in a rapidly increasing number of grant-earning secondary and quasi-secondary schools. The Cinderella of the curriculum had already become, at least in these schools, the favourite and privileged daughter who received all the attentions of the visitors and monopolized the pin-money.

Then came the famous Cockerton judgment, the great Education Acts of 1902-3 and the "new orientation" of administrative policy that followed on the establishment in 1899 of the Board of Education. The first of these declared the illegality of the "schools of science" set up by the School Boards; the second

swept those bodies out of existence and assigned their powers, together with new powers in connection with secondary education, to the general local authorities ; while the policy of the Board of Education, as it gradually declared itself under the influence of a new personnel, put a stop to the triumphant progress of science and destroyed its privileged position as a grant-earning subject.

The present situation, then, as compared with that of twenty years ago, is roughly as follows. In the Elementary Schools there is, undoubtedly, less teaching of science. The existence of "schools of science" within the elementary system was not only a symptom but also a cause of a concentration of interest upon the subject that had distinct effects in the ordinary schools and a strong influence on the attitude of the rank and file of teachers. With the disappearance of the special grants the attention given to science has very sensibly diminished. As regards secondary education the changes have been more complicated. In 1898 Secondary Schools could be divided into two well-contrasted groups. Those which accepted the grants of the Education Department were compelled to give a predominantly scientific curriculum ;<sup>1</sup> those—including all the "public" schools—which could afford to keep their freedom, or refused to barter it, continued to go their own way : that is, they retained the old classical

<sup>1</sup> The Regulations required a "school of science" to give not less than thirteen hours per week to an obligatory course containing not more than five hours mathematics and, in addition, physics, chemistry, drawing and practical geometry. Of the ten hours to be devoted to "other approved subjects," two might be given to manual instruction, and two others to mathematics or art. After two years, practical geometry became optional. Thus, out of twenty-three compulsory hours, only six were required to be given to languages (including English), history, geography and other "general subjects."

curriculum modified to a very variable extent in deference to the demands of the modern spirit. During the twenty years science teaching has been levelled down in the former group and levelled up in the latter ; it has lost its predominance in the grant-earning schools, but has secured a much stronger footing in the rest.

A reference to these historical circumstances forms, for several reasons, a convenient introduction to this chapter ; for, in the first place, the English tradition of science-teaching was largely formed in the "school of science." The more enthusiastic friends of the subject are prone, sometimes unconsciously, to assess its present position in terms of the standards which obtained during its brief period of empire ; its enemies derive from the same epoch much of their hostility, and its lukewarm friends many of their reservations. Secondly, in a period when interest was so much concentrated upon science-teaching, curricula and methods of instruction were subjected to a testing process whose results are of permanent value. A third reason goes deeper. The earlier work of the Science and Art Department was based upon the sound idea that a wider familiarity with science was an urgent national need : that science, particularly chemistry and physics, had become "bread-and-butter knowledge," without which a modern industrial State must starve. But in time this idea became merged in a wider one—preached with a rather narrow vehemence by Spencer, with a sweeter reasonableness by Huxley. The gospel of these writers and their followers was that the study of science is not merely useful, but may be made the basis of a culture alternative, and even superior, to the older linguistic culture. The "school of science"

was an embodiment and a manifesto of that gospel. It challenged the supremacy of the culture based on letters by offering one based on the achievements of the chemist, the physicist, and the biologist. Lastly, the conditions of twenty years ago have in some important respects returned. The educational conscience of England is once more stirring uneasily in its sleep; is, in fact, more nearly awake than it has been for centuries. Once more "neglect of science" is the loudest of the cries that disturb its slumber. Once more we are urged to protect our children against the faery spell of the old learning; to clear their vision by science so that they may see the world as it really is. And we are about to witness once more an outburst of administrative activity and the establishment of new institutions—the Continuation Schools and the "advanced courses" in Secondary Schools—which will offer fresh fields for experiment on a large scale.

We shall hardly deal with this situation wisely unless we remember the lessons learnt in the "schools of science." Those schools proved beyond doubt that science, well taught, may be an excellent educational instrument; but their very efficiency in their own line only made more evident the unwelcome truth that no one instrument, however admirable and however skilfully used, can do the whole work of education. That is why the system was abandoned, and rightly abandoned. Scientific culture, made universal and exclusive, would become, it was seen, as oppressive a tyrant as the culture it sought to dethrone, and would not fail to develop an equally narrowing pedantry.

This discovery not only stands as a warning to the incautious enthusiast; properly understood, it also helps to make clear the true grounds for the inclusion of

science in the school curriculum and the position the subject should occupy therein. Let us, then, inquire what those grounds and that position are.

The first point to be seized is that a subject justly claims a place in the school only in so far as it represents a movement of primary importance in the evolution of the human spirit. That criterion is clearly satisfied, for example, by the study of great literatures, of art and of music. It needs no argument to prove that civilization would be enormously poorer if any one of these historic types of activity had perished in its youth or ceased now to be cultivated. There is no question, therefore, that instruction suitably founded on them enriches, enlarges, ennobles—in a word, *humanizes*—the minds of children and young people. Science claims admission on the same ground. If it were merely useful knowledge it might, like shorthand or “commercial French,” rightly be excluded or relegated to an inferior place among the studies of youth. But it is more than useful knowledge. Equally with literature and art, science is one of the grand historic expressions of the human spirit; it is entitled, therefore, to an equally honourable and spacious position in the curriculum.

The spirit in which the subject should be taught follows from the same criterion. We teachers are too ready to think that the educational virtue of a subject lies in some essence that can be distilled from it and administered in regular doses as a mental tonic. This persistent prejudice—a veritable idol of our tribe—accounts for the classical teacher’s faith in laborious construing and mechanical verse-making, for the mathematician’s belief in the talismanic properties of Euclid. Science-teachers, inheriting the same unfortunate habit,

have thought that the educative power of their subject, too, must reside in some isolable elixir. That is why they have too often focussed their efforts upon "cultivating observation" or "inculcating scientific method."

The defect of these and kindred views is that they attribute to a part what belongs, in reality, only to the whole. The prime contribution of the heroes of science to the world's cultural wealth is not the scientific method but the scientific life. In accordance with our criterion, our business is, then, to teach the realization of the life, not the mastery of the method. It is true that the scientific method is as necessary to the scientific life as breathing to the bodily life ; but the scientific method, cultivated as an end in itself, resembles the method of the man of science only as artificial respiration resembles natural breathing. Our proper aim, then, is to make our pupils feel, so far as they may, what it is to be, so to speak, inside the skin of the man of science, looking out through his eyes as well as using his tools, experiencing not only something of his labours, but also something of his sense of joyous intellectual adventure.

Two questions naturally arise at this point : What are the marks of the scientific life, and, In what sense can boys and girls be made to "realize" it ? Let us attempt to answer them.

The most obvious and fundamental characteristics of the scientific life are a love for "nature" and a disinterested desire to understand her ways. There are two things here, love and understanding, which God has joined together and man cannot hope to sunder without grievous loss to both. Wordsworth spoke sound philosophy when he said that "Nature never

did betray the heart that loved her." The complementary proposition is equally true: it is only to her lovers that Nature reveals her secrets. She has endless ruses for baffling the inquiries of those who do not approach her in the right spirit. That is why the magician and the medicine-man have contributed so little to scientific knowledge. They have sought to understand Nature not because they loved her but because they feared her, or they have tried to bully her into subservience to their own ends. That is, again, why practical applications of science—even the more clearly beneficent ones, such as the use of anæsthetics, antiseptics, X-rays and wireless telegraphy—have generally been based on the discoveries of men who pursued nature-knowledge for its own sake. It is the plain hard fact that valuable scientific truths are not attainable by the man who seeks them simply for the sake of subsequent dividends. He can gain them only if he is able for a while to put the marriage-portion out of his head and woo Nature as a disinterested lover. Commonly he cannot, and so prudently employs, at an exiguous remuneration, some one who can.

The first aim of the science-teacher must be, then, to make his pupils disinterested lovers of nature. This is uncomfortable doctrine to two very different types of persons. One is the "practical man" who supports the teaching of science in schools and technical institutes because he believes in its cash value. The other is the "high-browed" person who assesses all educational effort in terms of "mental discipline." The former will distrust the cultivation of a love of nature as a sentimental aim distracting attention from the real business of the science-teacher. The latter

may concede that it is not a bad thing so long as too much is not made of it, but will resent a proposal to put it in the forefront of our endeavours. Both must learn unless it is put in the forefront neither will secure what he specially desires. In the long run there is no money or "efficiency" to be got out of scientific studies not motived by genuine scientific impulses, and there is no mental discipline worth having.

Skilful teachers of the subject understand well the cardinal importance of this aim, and contrive, often with great success, to communicate to their pupils a genuine and strong love for scientific investigation and a permanent interest in its fruits. On the other hand, candour must admit that failures are far from infrequent. It is disturbing to discover how many young people, even among those who have a definite scientific bent, find their school science uninspiring and even boring. They will often confess, after leaving school, that their official instruction was unsatisfying, and that they had to feed their scientific appetite from private sources. In too many instances the appetite is even destroyed by the lessons that should have whetted and nourished it. These disasters are generally put down to the account of that much-abused person, the examiner. He must, no doubt, bear a large part of the blame, but the root of the trouble lies in ideas and presuppositions which exercise undue sway over the teacher's mind as well as over the examiner's. In a word, both attach too much importance to the formal and theoretical aspects of science, and too little to those which give the subject value in the eyes of boys and girls. The teacher fresh from the University is especially liable to this fault. He

(or she) has learnt to regard a science as essentially a systematic logical structure. From that standpoint precision in definitions, caution in generalization, and rigour in testing hypotheses appear to be the elementary conditions of scientific thought ; indeed, nothing which falls short in these respects seems worthy to be counted as science at all. Science-teaching, conducted in this spirit, is prone to become an austere and even solemn business, singularly unfitted to nourish the enthusiasm of youth.

The teacher who is tempted to adopt this attitude should reflect that he is expecting his pupils to start from a point he himself reached only slowly, and perhaps late in his development as a student. The things in science that now loom most important in his eyes are the things of most significance from the standpoint of theory. For example, a quite unimpressive reaction of some substance hardly to be found outside a laboratory now interests him far more than a brilliant piece of chemical thaumaturgy, if the former throws light on a disputed question of molecular composition, while the latter is merely a pretty or striking experiment. But he certainly began his career with a very different scale of values, and where he was then his pupils are now.

These criticisms are not intended to depreciate exact thinking as an aim of scientific training. Every one must admit that science-teaching which does not develop a sense of the value of exact thought has failed in one of its main objects. We seek merely to emphasize two truths of great practical importance. The first is that habits of exact thought and interest in scientific theory must be regarded as goals marking the end of the course, not entrance gates into it.

They show the direction in which the teacher should press steadily, but always with patience and tolerance based upon sympathetic understanding of the juvenile point of view: The second is that the teacher will best attain his ultimate aims, in this as in all other subjects, not by ignoring the pupil's natural interests, but by cunningly using them to further his own designs.

We speak here of "natural" interests in the realm of science. Is it possible to say in general terms what these are? Undoubtedly. Children differ widely in specific interests, but what we have called the thaumaturgic side of science—the wondrous powers and magical transformations of material things; the curious ways of animals in field, wood and pond; the beauty and mystery of plant-life; the majestic processes of the heavens: these are things whose charm is felt by all young minds. The life-passion of the man of science has generally begun here, and it is here, therefore, that the science-teacher should begin. We may add, that he will do well occasionally to give even his maturer pupils what Dr. F. H. Hayward calls "red-letter lessons"—lessons whose avowed aim is to demonstrate beautiful and striking phenomena and in which theoretical interests are allowed to take a holiday.

Again, no healthy-minded boy or girl fails to be interested in the utilitarian and practical side of science: to wonder how this is made, how that "works," how the other is found out. If striking and beautiful phenomena are most apt to turn native curiosity towards science, these useful applications of exact knowledge serve best to discipline it into a study of theoretical principles. The garden or the ploughed

field is the place where the problems of plant-physiology should arise ; physical questions should be raised largely in connection with records and predictions of the weather, the flotation of ships, the action of the electric telegraph and the dynamo ; and so on. In spite of what has been done in recent years the great need in science-teaching is still to clear academic lumber out of the curriculum, to open the windows and let fresh air in. The laboratory and the lecture-room should be places where young students may be helped to come to close quarters with things they really want to do and to know about : not the etiolated facts and "bloodless categories" of the text-books, but the things the "play-book of science" and the juvenile encyclopædia tell them about—sometimes wisely, sometimes less wisely, but generally with a keen discernment of the actual tastes and impulses of young people. The watchful teacher will always find his chance to guide the intellectual energy that seeks these things into the channels of "scientific method" ; and method thus acquired will become a vital part of the 'learner's mental habit, not merely an accomplishment kept strictly for use at school.

These observations lead to two more. (1) The special mark of the "new teaching" is the endeavour to exploit the pupil's spontaneity more boldly than has hitherto been thought desirable, and to guide his development with a looser rein. If we pursue this endeavour seriously we must admit much more variability in learning and teaching. The ideal of a course laid down in advance for all pupils, with their achievements mapped out ahead for each session, term and hour, must give place to an ideal of progress more elastic and more closely related to the ways of mental